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THE ABSOLUTENESS OF CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING TO E. TROELTSCH

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abs. d. Chr.	-	Die Absolutheit des Christentums und die Religionsgeschichte
Schriften II	-	Gesammelte Schriften. Zur religiösen Lage. Religionsphilosophie u. Ethik. 2nd ed. 1922 (1st ed. 1913)
Z Th K	-	Zeitschrift für Theologie u Kirche
Christe Weltausch	-	"Die Christliche Weltanschauung und ihre Gegenströmungen" in Schriften II
R.E.	-	Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie u. Kirche ed. by Hauck-Herzog.
W.L.	-	Die wissenschaftliche Lage u. ihre Anforderungen an die Theologie
Rel. Phil.	-	"Religionsphilosophie". Die Philosophie im Beginn des XX ten Jahrhunderts. Vol.I ed. by W. Windelband.
W.d.R.	-	Wesen der Religion u. der Religionwissenschaft (Schriften II, p452.)
"E & Pl."	-	Empirismus u. Platonismus in der Religionsphilosophie.
Rel. Apr.	-	Zur Frage des religiösen Apriori
Beg. d. Kont.	-	Die Bedentung des Begriffs der Kontigenz
Psych u. Erk.	-	Psychologie u. Erkenntnistheorie. 2nd ed. 1922.

All essays contained in 2nd ed. 1922, of the second volume of Troeltsch's Gesammelte Schriften are quoted as "Schriften II"

THE PROBLEM OF THE ABSOLUTENESS OF CHRISTIANITY AS DISCUSSED BY E. TROELTSCH, IN ITS HISTORICO-PHILOSOPHICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ASPECTS

In his book "Idealism and the Modern Age," G. P. Adams distinguishes two fundamental philosophic attitudes towards the world and life, the attitude of possessive participation and the attitude of active control. Persons dominated by the attitude of participation lean back on certain fundamental logical, ethical and aesthetic structures. Their chief intellectual interest is to assure themselves of the permanence and unchangeableness of these structures and of the possibility of sharing in them. On the other hand the attitude of active control desires to look upon the world and life as plastic, as something to be reconstructed in accordance with certain interests and aspirations of individuals and groups.[1]

The same fundamental attitudes of participation and activity we find in religion. Faith for some people lays hold on certain unchangeable realities; for others it is an aspiration which endeavors to mould and shape life according to certain interests.

The question which we intend to discuss in this dissertation forms a basis for judging the validity of these attitudes in religion. If Christianity as a form of religious and moral life is absolute or final the only attitude compatible with it would be that of appropriation. Our intellectual task

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1. G.P. Adams, Idealism and the Modern Age, p. 9.

in connection with it would be to safeguard it against the rival claims of other forms of religion and morality, and our practical task would limit itself to the application of Christianity to the moral and religious problems as they arise.

On the other hand if Christianity is a truly historical phenomenon, developmental in character, the attitude of participation in connection with Christian faith would be wholly inadequate. We would have to help in making it and developing it so as to make it applicable to changed conditions.

Among the great number of discussions concerning the absoluteness of Christianity which might be profitably discussed we have selected the views of Ernst Troeltsch. Our chief reason for doing so is the combination of the systematic and the historical interest which characterize his views. Formerly the scientist was looked upon as the great antagonist of the systematic theologian. At present his most dangerous rival is the historian with his genetic way of thinking. The historian claims more and more the right to be heard first in deciding such matters as the nature and the truth of Christianity. But few systematic theologians are as yet willing to concede this right. The development of Christian institutions, ideas, sentiments, they would willingly turn over to the historian. The question of the validity and truth of the Christian religion, on the other hand, they maintain can be solved

only by philosophic or systematic thought. From these rival claims of the historian and the systematic theologian it seems apparent that a question like the one suggested by the title of our dissertation can be discussed profitably only by men who understand both way s of thinking. E. Troeltsch's thought is of a nature which fulfills this condition and it is for this reason that we select for critical consideration his views concerning the absoluteness of Christianity.

Moreover, Troeltsch had an experimental mind, always ready to approach problems from several points of view. He was constantly open to new suggestions from any field of investigation and was anxious to try such suggestions out in theology. A discussion of Troeltsch's views thus has the advantage of putting us in contact with all the main currents of thought in modern philosophy and theology, thus enabling us to realize their effect on the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity.

Having given the reasons for choosing the subject indicated by the title, let us state the main divisions of our discussion. We shall first sketch certain typical conceptions of the absoluteness of Christianity in modern Protestantism which form the background of Troeltsch's views. This will be followed by an enumeration of the various positions in regard to the problem of absoluteness maintained by Troeltsch in various stages of his investigation. The character of the first two divisions will be historical. The third and main division

of our dissertation will contain the systematic discussion of Troeltsch's final and most characteristic viewpoint. A critical estimate of Troeltsch's views will constitute the fourth division.

DIVISION I

TYPICAL CONCEPTIONS OF THE ABSOLUTENESS OF CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN PROTESTANTISM

There are two conceptions of absoluteness which we shall consider in our historical sketch; they may be called the realistic and the idealistic conceptions. Orthodox theology and Ritschlianism are chiefly interested in an object of faith, and the views of absoluteness entertained by these types of thought have a realistic character. Hegelianism on the other hand and the theology of Schleiermacher are concerned with a kind of religious consciousness, and the views of absoluteness found in these types may be designated idealistic. Orthodox theology and Ritschlianism are dualistic. The absoluteness of the Christian religion for these two forms of thought depends on the assurance it conveys of an indisputably divine fact, originating in a supernatural or absolute plane. Hegelianism and the theology of Schleiermacher are monistic. The religious object thus is organically one with a certain form which the religious consciousness takes. The absoluteness of the Christian religion for these types of thought therefore follows from the assurance it gives of possessing the final and perfect form of religious consciousness.

CHAPTER I

ORTHODOX THEOLOGY. SUPERNATURALISM

Modern Protestant orthodox theology has developed two forms of supernaturalism whichmay be distinguished as the rationalistic and the experiential. Both forms of orthodoxy hold that Christianity as an historical religion, i.e., as a definite phenomenon in time and space possesses facts and truths of an absolute character. Christianity as an historical phenomenon has religious and moral truths which are divine, not human; permanent, not changeable; perfect, not improvable. The essentials of Christianity are historical events which are unique in character as well as significance. Eternal truth and eternal fact thus are found imbedded in a temporal and historical process.

The meaning of this situation in orthodox theology will be better understood if we contrast it with the theology of the Enlightenment.[1] The rationalistic theology of the Enlightenment movement was an endeavor to unify the various existing interpretations of Christian doctrine by reducing Christianity to its "essence", i.e., a rational core which was

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1. E. Troeltsch, "Aufklärung", Realencyklopadie f. protestantische Theologie u. Kirche. (Hanck-Herzog). 3rd ed.Vol.II.p.225 ff. esp.p.239-240. New Schaff-Herzog.Vol. IV, p.141 ff. by Troeltsch.
   Ch.G. Shaw. "Enlightenment", Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.V, pp.310ff. esp. 3 Rational Christianity and 4 Natural religion.
   B. Pünjer, History of the Christian Philosophy of Religion, 1887. pp. 536-654.
   H. Hoffmann, "Aufklärung" in "Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart", Vol.I, pp.765ff. esp. 5.

identified with the content of natural religion. The doctrines concerning which men disagreed were eliminated. The resulting Christian religion purged from historical and accidental elements was reduced to a rational, universal, eternal content, uncontaminated by the contingent, the temporal, and the merely human.[1] This rational Christian religion is identical with pure or natural religion, as contrasted with its distortion by human irrationality and weakness in the various conflicting sects. The theology of the Enlightenment thus holds that Christianity has an absolute religious and moral content to offer. But in contradistinction to orthodox theology it does not find this absolute content in the historical aspects of the Christian religion but rather in a number of rational truths which are permanent, unchangeable, and universal.

To prove the validity of the absolute content of the Christian religion the theology of the Enlightenment could simply refer to the ordinary rational and universal operations of human thought. Orthodox theology on the other hand had to find an historical basis for the establishment of the absolute content of Christianity.

(Footnote 1,p.6 Continued)
R. Eucken, Die Lebensanschauungen der grossen Denker.

1. W.A.Brown points out that Origen "recognizes as the supreme revelation of God, a new eternal Gospel, and regards historic Christianity itself as but a passing stage destined at last to be superseded and outgrown. The same thought is found in the Middle Ages in Joachim of Floris and in Nicholas of Cusa; in more modern times in Lessing. "Essence of Christianity", p. 67 and footnote.

We shall now point out how the two forms of orthodoxy attempt to harmonize this claim of the absoluteness of the Christian religion with its historical character.[1]

a. Rationalistic supernaturalism.

Rationalistic supernaturalism establishes the absoluteness of the Christian religion by completely isolating it as an historical phenomenon from all other religions and other phases of human life.[2]

History is divided into profane and sacred history. The former includes all non-Christian religions, and all non-religious forms of mental activity, art, science, philosophy. Sacred history is confined to the history of Israél, as preparatory to the realization of redemption, and the events of the life of Christ, and of the early Christian church. Christianity as an historical phenomenon is held to be different in

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1. Our discussion must keep two things in view: (1) the content, religious and moral, to which absoluteness is ascribed; (2) the form of argument by which the absoluteness of that content is established. Our chief interest will center around the second point. The first point however cannot be eliminated entirely and will become more important as our discussion progresses. In our discussion of "rationalistic supernaturalism" no special reference will be found to point (1), since it is quite obvious that the content of the Christian religion is the traditional one. Roughly speaking, it involves the ideas of a special redemptive history, a divine human savior, a threefold participation in the process of salvation by the triune God, a special redemptive act in the death on the cross, a supernaturally guided appropriation of the supply of grace, a final cataclysmic termination of history.
2. H.Hoffmann, "Rationalismns u. Supernaturalismns" in "Die Religion in Geschichte u Gegenwart",Vol.IV,p.2040ff. A.Sabatier, Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit.

kind from all other historical phenomena.

Profane history is linked together by the strict relationship of cause and effect, every event is the outcome of antecedent conditions located in the same plane with the event. Christianity on the other hand is due to supernatural causation which cuts the network of ordinary causality whenever necessary.

Moreover it is the supernatural or miraculous origin of Christianity which makes its content absolute. Miracles are the supreme sign and test of absoluteness.[1] A supernatural, superhistorical origin makes any fact or doctrine absolute, and establishes its unique truth. It becomes thus all important to show that other religions have no miracles, that they lack supernatural causation. Modern orthodox apologetics in this respect turns out to be more rigid and intolerant than the apologetics of the early Christian church. The latter living in an atmosphere of the miraculous right along, and the distinction between the natural and supernatural in its modern

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1. The content of the Christian religion is not self-evident, as is the rational religion of the Enlightenment. Certainty of its content is not reached directly but through reliance on miracle, which proves its authority.
   K. Heim shows in his "Gewissheitsproblem" that this difference between an "axiomatic" and "authoritative" conception of theological knowledge goes back to the discussions of the Franciscans & Thomas, (p.31) and has its source in the neo-platonic or Augustinian and the Aristotelian theories of knowledge respectively. (pp.33 ff)

sense not having emerged, could scarcely brush aside the claims of other religions concerning miracles. The only way open was to show that they were works of evil spirits or the devil himself. Modern orthodox apologetics however, cannot accept such a position, it must prove the non-existence of all these other miracles and the invalidity of their truth-claim.

What decides the absoluteness of the Christian religion is therefore the manner of its origin. If we avail ourselves of Troeltsch's terminology we can also state the situation in this way: what determines the absoluteness of Christianity is not its content but its form.[1] It has the form of supernaturalness and that makes the content absolute or establishes it as the final ultimate truth. Any empirical approach to the content of the Christian religion, its idea of God, the person of Jesus, his message, the moral life of the Christian community is insufficient. We must first have the guarantee of its supernatural roots before we can accept it as absolute truth. The medieval condition is reproduced once more.[2] It is more important to know that God wills certain truths than it is to

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1. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.11.
2. V. Cathrein, "Glauben u. Wissen". 1903. Faith means "to accept all those things as indubitably true which God has revealed and because he has revealed them". Vatican Council: Faith is "a supernatural virtue, by means of which we regard as true all the things revealed by God, not because we can comprehend their inner truth by means of natural reason, but because of the authority of God, who has revealed them and who can never err nor lead any one astray." Lutheran orthodoxy in its most ancient form bridges the gap between reason and revelation on the basis of the idea of law. God's law is accessible to reason, But law also gives meaning to the gospel. Justification becomes ration-

take account of the content of these truths. Orthodox theology therefore spends its primary energy in proving the divine origin of the Bible, or the dogma of the Church, of Christ, of redemption

From the preceding survey it is evident that the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity for rationalistic supernaturalism reduces itself to the supernatural character of Christianity. Absolute truth can arise in an historical process since the particular historical process in which it arises is different from what is ordinarily called an historical process. Although human or profane history can produce nothing but imperfect and changeable contents supernatural history, being the direct result of the activity of the absolute and perfect Being, offers absolute and ultimate truth.

The supernatural origin of Christianity makes its contents divine revelation. Instead of saying therefore that the absoluteness of Christianity rests on its miraculous origin we might say with equal right that Christianity is absolute because of its revelatory character. A revealed content according to orthodox theology is one which has come about by supernatural intervention.

The reason now for establishing the absoluteness of Christianity on the basis of revelation is the doctrine of the depravity of human nature as entertained by orthodoxy. Man being

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ally comprehensive because of the idea of law. Thus in spite of the extreme dualism of Lutheranism between reason and revelation, faith becomes comprehensible because of the innate moral law. Troeltsch, Vern. u. Off. bei Gerhard u Melanchthon, pp. 134-5.

sinful by nature his reason is at the mercy of the lower impulses. By means of his own inherent capacities he can never reach ultimate or absolute truth. If he is to possess it at all it must be supplied to him. The need for drawing a rigid line of demarcation between truths springing from the unaided human mind and truths having their source of God becomes apparent. Now the doctrine of revelation or supernatural origin is supposed to satisfy this need.

b. Experiential Supernaturalism

Rationalistic supernaturalism, as we have seen, ascribes absoluteness to the Christian religion because it is the revelation from the perfect God. Final truth and an absolutely divine Being imply each other. The same combination of these ideas is continued in experiential supernaturalism.[1] Nevertheless we find in it at the same time a more pronounced emphasis on the redemptive character of the Christian religion. And it is because of this quality that absoluteness is ascribed to it by the representatives of experiential supernaturalism. The

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1. Ihmels, Die Christliche Wahrheitsgewissheit
   " , Zentralfragen der Dogmatik
   " , Blicke in die neuere dogmatische Arbeit. Nene kirchliche
   " , Zeitschrift. XVI p. 505-522.
   Frank, H.R., System der christlichen Gewissheit
   " , System der christlichen Wahrheit.
   , System der christlichen Ethik.
   Troeltsch, E. Die Absolutheit des Christentums, 2nd. ed. Preface pp. XVII-XX and p.10.

absoluteness of Christianity thus appears as an implication of the idea of redemption,[1] and not merely as an implication of the idea of a perfect and changeless God who is the author of a theological system.

Revelation as conceived by this type of thought is to be defined as a redemptive act in history for the sake of establishing a relationship of communion between God as redeemer and man as a sinner needing salvation.[2] Now since Christianity is this redemptive act religion has found its final meaning, its absolute truth in it and no further improvements can be made.

"Communion is communion you can add nothing to it." In the historic person of Jesus redemption finds its fulfillment and goal which makes it unique and absolute.[3]

From the idea of absoluteness as the necessary implication of the Christian view of redemption we must now turn to the proof offered by experiential supernaturalism to establish the absoluteness of Christianity.

Confronted by the progress of modern scientific method in the field of historical research experiential supernaturalism hesitates to base the absoluteness of Christianity directly on the idea of an exclusive supernatural causality manifested through

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1. Hunzinger, A.W. Probleme u. Aufgaben der gegenwartigen systematischen Theologie. 1919. p. 65.66.68.69. "Prinzipiell ist der absolukeitsanspruch durch die Mittlerschaft Jesu Christi vollständig bestimmt".p.71.
2. Ihmels, "Zentralfragen, der Dogmatik". pp. 59, 63.
3. " . " " " ". pp. 64, 55.

historically discernible external miracles. Although it avails itself of the idea of a dualistic form of causality it refrains from using it after the fashion of the rationalistic orthodox theologian to demonstrate the absoluteness of Christianity.

Deprived thus of the rationalistic use of the idea of dual causality the experiential supernaturalist construes a specifically Christian theory of knowledge to maintain the absoluteness of the Christian religion. The chief factors of this epistemology which are of interest to us in this connection are its interpretation of (1) Christian experience and (2) of certainty.[1]

(1) In Christianity, so this theory holds, we have a kind of religious experience unlike every other religious experience. In utter contradiction to what might be expected the sinner finds redemption and restoration. Just as in our sense perceptual experience contents are thrust upon us which we cannot avoid so in Christian experience a redemptive content overwhelms the individual and conveys upon him a form of religious life which no human mind could ever invent.[2] It is this compulsory nature of the Christian experience which constitutes its objectivity. Or rather this feature of compulsion makes it evident that the Christian experience is not the outcome of our ordinary religious needs but is the immediate apprehension of God as redeemer through which needs are aroused

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1. Ihmels, "Die Christliche Wahrheitsgewissheit, ihr letzter Grund und ihre Entstehung", 1901. 1914.
2. Ibid. 1914. p. 196.

which can only be satisfied in a supersensible experience.[1] Salvation comes to the individual as a surprise and therefore testifies to a supernatural origin.

Because of its compulsory character Christian experience thus places us in a realm entirely different from the realm of natural occurrences. The redemptive order of which the Christian is conscious is not explained by the order of nature. It is an order whose causes lie in a plane wholly different from the one from which our ordinary experiences and non-Christian religious experiences emerge.[2] In other words the redemptive order is not a phase of the relative and immanent forces of nature. It is an absolute order.

(2) But what kind of certainty does the apprehension of the redemptive order carry with it? For the experiential supernaturalist science cannot furnish the pattern for the kind of certainty needed in the religious and moral realm.[3] Certainty in these experiences is practical not theoretical and depends on an act of will. Moreover Christian certainty is not merely practical it has a specific quality which other forms of practical certainty are lacking. It is the certainty of faith.[4] Now faith is not a mere mood or sentiment, it is directed towards an object. It is an act of trust towards the author of the

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1. This is the very opposite of what W.A. Brown calls psychological absoluteness. Christianity is not absolute because it meets every religious need which man has, but rather because it produces unique needs which it afterwards satsifies.
2. Ihmels, Zentralfragen der Dogmatik, p. 169.
3. " , Die Christiliche Waterheitsgewissheit, p. 194.
4. " , Ibid, p. 210.

redemptive order. The individual who coming in contact with the arrangement of redemption opens up to it in that experience becomes conscious of a kind of certainty which is wholly unique. Christian certainty thus rests on what Thmels calls a supernatural "Urentscheidung".[1]

The certainty of faith which the Christian possesses is the outcome of a supernatural activity of God on the soul. It is a miracle and holds only for those who have made the experience. No analogical situation can therefore be found in the realm of human knowledge. Christian certainty is "sui generis". supernatural, and absolute, wholly untouched by the relative aspects of other knowledge.

The real problem of the absoluteness of Christianity as stated above (p.) consists in the harmonization of the claim of absoluteness with the historic character of the Christian religion. Now rationalistic supernaturalism tries to solve the problem by introducing the idea of dual causality which is rationally comprehensible. Experiential supernaturalism also has a dual world, the natural world which is relative and the redemptive world which is absolute. It also conceives of the redemptive order as breaking forth at a definite time and at a definite place in history.in the full effluence of its absoluteness. But it differs from rationalistic supernaturalism in maintaining that the certainty of this absolute

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1. Ibid, p. 241.

redemptive content is wholly unique, superrational and limited to a special form of Christian experience. But how does the experiential supernaturalist relate his specifically Christian certainty concerning the absolute redemptive content of Christianity which he professes to have to the results of the science of history concerning the same content? The rationalistic supernaturalist distinguishes between two forms of history. According to the one the historical process is a network of immanent causes, according to the other a certain phase of it is the direct product of a transcendent cause. But both conceptions are equally rational. The experiential supernaturalist on the other hand has a special experience implying an appreciation and interpretation of historic facts which is wholly unique and superrational and over against it an ordinary historical method which as long as it is not going to sacrifice its scientific character must question the presuppositions of that experience.

For the representatives of experiental supernaturalism the Christian tradition as contained in the Bible is part and parcel of the redemptive order. Christian certainty is certainly concerning the Bible as the "word" of God, it is certainly concerning a document as divine redemptive revelation.[1] Christian experience thus is in the most vital manner connected with a content which is at the same time subject matter for historical investigation. Let us see how Himels as one of the fore-

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1. Ibid, pp. 218-219.

most representatives of the type of thought now under consideration meets this issue.

(1) The claims of Christian certainty concerning an absolute redemptive order might conflict with the general presuppositions of the historical method. The latter deals with immanent relationships but the redemptive order is transcendent. Ihmel's answer is that a method must shape itself according to the material it deals with.[1] If the historical method as a means of interpretation meets with experiences which it cannot relate to antecedent conditions in a strictly immanent manner it must abandon its claim as an all sufficient instrument of interpretation and make room for another method.

(2) A second source of conflict between the certainty of faith and the certainty of historical science might be found in certain specific results arrived at by the historical method in regard to certain contents of the Christian faith. This difficulty is met by the following consideration. Historical inquiry can never get at the meaning which historical facts have for our communion with God.[2] History never reaches these aspects of the facts which make them revelation. Christian tradition in addition to its purely historical character is also revelatory and supernatural. As redemptive revelation it makes its appeal directly without any scientific mediation. The historical method cannot touch it in its redemptive significance.

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1. Ihmels, Zentralfragen der Dogmatik, p. 48.
2. " , Die Christliche Waterheitsgewissheit, pp. 288-289.

(3) Finally how does experiential supernaturalism relate the idea of a special form of Christian certainty which proves Christianity to be the absolute religion, to the "religionsgeschichtliche" viewpoint which places Christianity in line with all the other historical religions? The answer is that the study of religious facts and movements is different from the evaluation of those facts.[1] The scientific study of religion cannot solve the question of the worth of the various forms of religion. It is the student's own religiosity which determines the value of religions. Christianity's claim to be the absolute religion can be tested only by the appeal to personal religious experience. Mere scientific investigation can neither affirm nor deny this belief. Here again the uniqueness of the Christian experience exempts the believer from dependence on the pronouncements of history.

The results of our study of experiental supernaturalism may now be summed up in the following propositions. (1) Absoluteness is a necessary characteristic of Christianity because it is the religion of a divinely accomplished redemptive act. (2) The unique character of Christian experience and Christian certainty proves Christianity to be the absolute religion. (3) The historical investigation of the Christian religion and of religions in general is unable to contest the claim of Christianity to be the absolute religion since scientific knowledge cannot solve questions oof worth and value.

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1. Ihmels, Die Christliche Waterheitsgewissheit. p. 306.

CHAPTER II

RITSCHLIANISM

The interest of Ritschlianism like that of orthodoxy centers in an object of faith. The question of absoluteness thus is identical with the search for an absolute object of faith. Such an object the Christian religion is affirmed to possess.

Since Ritschlianism has developed into a great variety of forms it would seem to make for clearness if instead of trying to deal comprehensively with Ritschlianism, we take an outstanding representative whose views embody the fundamental tenets of the school. We shall limit our discussion therefore to the ideas of W. Herrmann[1] in which we encounter all the outstanding characteristics of Ritschlianism, e.g., (1) the rejection of metaphysics in theology, (2) the emphasis on a special religious theory of knowledge, (3) the historical approach to Christianity, (4) the acceptance of a scientific attitude towards the Christian tradition, and (5) the limitation of revelation to the person of Jesus.

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1. W. Herrmann, Die Metaphysik in der Theologie. 1876.
   , Die Religion im Verhältnis zum Wälterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit. 1879.
   , Der evangelische Glaube und die Theologie A. Ritschls. 2nd ed. 1896.
   , Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott. 4th ed. 1903.
   , Offenbarung u Wunder. 1908.
   , Ethik. 5th ed. 1913.
   , Christlich. Protestantische Dogmatik. in Kultur der Gegenwart. I, IV, 2.

W. Herrmann ascribes the quality of absoluteness to the inner life and character of the person of the historical Jesus. In him a will and power of goodness manifests itself unique in the history of religions. It lifts Christianity therefore out of the realm of the other religions and places it over against them as the absolute religion.[1]

This central fact of Christianity is absolute in the ordinary sense of the term. It is unrelated since the ordinary forces of nature and history did not contribute to the production. It is a perfect fact for it is the expression of a perfect God. It is also permanent and unsurpassable.

But although all these designations perfectly hold as regards the idea of absoluteness found in Ritschlianism it is still more to the point to say that the idea of absoluteness is

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1. The difference between Herrmann's view and the views of orthodox theology concerning the content to which absoluteness is ascribed is that the former may be said to be more "factual". It is therefore not so much an "absolute truth" which Christianity possesses according to Herrmann but an "absolute fact", an all powerful will of love and goodness. This is only a relative distinction however. The absolute truth of orthodox theology includes or is the truth of such facts as the supernatural birth of Jesus, his sinlessness, his death and ressurection, etc. And on the other hand the fact of an all powerful will of goodness is a fact with a meaning. But nevertheless an all powerful will of goodness conveys a stronger feeling of being a fact than the redemptive meaning of the Christian facts contained in the Christian tradition. The difference between the two positions reflects itself in their respective attitudes towards the Bible. For orthodox theology it is part and parcel of the absolute truth of Christianity for Herrmann it is a means of getting at an ultimate historical fact back of it.

an implication of the idea of the highest good. In Jesus the highest good which consists in the triumph of the moral law over nature is realized. In him personality as the ultimate soul of things finds full expression. The good will proves conqueror over all. The power manifesting itself in the person of Jesus is one which "makes the highest good triumphant" and must consequently be looked upon as absolute.[1] The claim of absoluteness which Christianity everywhere sets up is the natural result of the consciousness of an unconditioned value, a highest good having found its expression in it.

Herrmann's interpretation of the person of Jesus rests on his acceptance of the Kantian conception of the absoluteness of the moral imperative. In Jesus this absolute is historically realized.

But it is not merely the nature of its content which makes Christianity absolute but also the way of its realization. Jesus' life as the perfect embodiment of good will is a supersensible fact. It is an event which is "supra et contra naturam". The natural forces at work in the world could never produce a phenomenon like the inner life of Jesus. It arises out of another realm than nature. It is the transcendent realm of freedom w which gave it birth.[2]

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1. W. Herrmann, Die Religion im Verhältnis zum Welterk. u Sittlichkeit. pp. 82-83.
   W. Herrmann, Offenbarung u Wunder. p. 12.
2. Herrmann's dualism is the Kantian dualism of a phenomenal and noumenal realm. Cause and effect as the fundamental categories of the phenomenal make it impossible to regard phenomenal data in a miraculous manner. But nevertheless the moral law has the power of spontaneous self-realization in the world of ex-

Having pointed out the content to which Ritschlianism ascribes absoluteness and the meaning which it attaches to absoluteness let us now turn to an examination of the foundations on which Herrmann's affirmation of the absoluteness of Christianity rests. They are (1) historico-philosophical and (2) epistemological in character.

(1) The question of the value judgment and the dualistic conception of religions and scientific knowledge have absorbed the attention of most students of Ritschlianism to such an extent that the significance of the philosophy of history for Herrmann and other Ritschlians has often been overlooked. Now although Herrmann rejects metaphysics as an aid for theological thinking he opens the door widely to the philosophy of history.[1] It is entirely wrong to interpret Herrmann's view of the inner life of Jesus, which for him constitutes the central fact of Christianity as the outcome of a kind of "common sense" religious experience. On the contrary it is the result of a definite type of philosophy of history. All that we shall attempt

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(Note 2, p.22 cont'd.) perience. Natural causation and freedom or spontaneous self-realization are the two opposites for Herrmann.

Orthodox theology on the other hand maintains the dualism of a natural and supernatural realm. A miracle in this case is an event which cannot be explained by its antecedent conditions but has to be referred to a condition or cause of a higher order. Now such a cause would once more be a rational datum meant to explain an event. The miraculous realm would still be the explicable realm. From Herrmann's point of view such an explanation would put us back once more in the realm of nature for it is the explicable. A miracle for Herrmann is an event which opens up to man another reality than nature. W.Herrmann, Offenbarung und Wunder, p. 143. p. 33.

1. Cf. also Kafban in his "Truth of the Christian Religion".

in this short sketch is to point out how Herrmann's affirmation of the absoluteness of Christianity is related to his philosophy of history.

History is the realm of mental life[1] as distinguished from the realm of objects standing in external relationships. Mental life is held together by an immediate feeling of self while the realm of objects spreads out indefinitely. Wherever mental life is present, experiences are appropriated through an immediate self-feeling, thus enabling the individual to reach a selfcontained kind of life. Personal life thus has an inner complexion, it has wholeness and does not lose itself in external relationships but comes back to itself.[2] The historical is therefore just the opposite of the relational or the relative. It is now easily seen that only history can provide an "absolute" for Herrmann. Its very nature is to be self contained and to possess wholeness.

Purpose is another element which characterises history. But purposes are either relative or absolute. They are relative if formed on the basis of experiences of pleasure and pain.

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1. "Geistiges Leben". Objects here is meant in a broader sense than physical, so-called external objects. Anything that is subject to a relational form of thinking is an object. The realm of objects may include the psychical also. Psychology as a science deals with psychic life in this manner and thus neglects the unity of feeling which selfconsciousness possesses.
2. Herrmann, W. Die Religion im Verhaltuis zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit. pp. 399-400. 48.51

Aims emerging in this wise are changeable and make the individual subject to an indefinite chain of dissatisfactions and satisfactions. Life thus can only find wholeness through a highest good, an unconditioned end, in other words through the ethical idea. Now as such a moral agent the individual is the subject of history. We can only speak of true history where the moral law or the highest good is fully realized. An historical life is a life lived wholly from within in accordance with the moral law. The historical thus as the ethical is the absolute. It is from this point of view that Herrmann is able to interpret the life of Jesus as an embodiment of the "purely historical" since it is absolutely independent.[1,2]

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1. If the life of Jesus as self-contained is regarded as the truly historical type of life, the lives of other human beings are only approximations to the truly historical. The term "the historical" here is equivalent to the German "das Historische". The proper English equivalent would be the essence of history since historical in English is generally used as an adjective. But I wish to avoid the false associations which the term "essence" of history is apt to convey.
2. That the conception of history as here indicated is of fundamental importance for Herrmann's thinking is especially evident from his "Ethics". The cultural and social environment is looked upon as accidental for the moral act, not vitally related to the moral purpose. The man "who makes history" therefore is not the man who contributes to the cultural and social wealth of the race but the one who realizes the moral law. cf. E. Troeltsch, Die Grundprobleme der Ethik. Schriften II. pp. 552. ff. Troeltsch characterizes Herrmann's ethics as the ethics of subjective autonomy and places it over against the ethics of objective ends. For Troeltsch morality does not merely mean subjective autonomy, it also includes objective goods, thus finding his way back to cultural contents. (p.624)

(2) Very intimately related to the historico-philosophical considerations of Herrmann substantiating the affirmation of the absoluteness of Christianity are his epistemological views.

In this connection the well known Ritschlian dualism of knowledge has to be mentioned, which divides judgments into judgments of fact and judgments of value. The former dealing with explicable reality or the realm of objects express the attitude of science. Dealing with relationships which extend indefinitely an absolute content can never find expression in the judgment of fact. The judgment of value on the other hand deals with experiential reality, with personal contents which have wholeness and thus proves an adequate means of dealing with the appreciation of absolute contents.[1]

The value judgment being the vehicle of appreciation of an absolute good the factors involved in the affirmation of Christianity as this good are on the one hand the unconditioned moral law involved in the desire to be a person and on the other

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1. We are here dealing with matters so familiar that it needs anapology almost for referring to them at all. It is the larger connection in which they are put that will justify this insertion. But in spite of the familiarity of these ideas of Ritschlianism it is often overlooked that the value judgment in Herrmann's thought at least is not a particular religious form of expression. Its connection with religion is only indirect mediated by the fact that the Christian religion is historical. The value judgment expresses historical reality and since the Christian religion is historical it must make use of the value judgment.

the picture of the inner life of Jesus. Subject to the ethical necessity of an absolute standard of evaluation we are overwhelmed by the spiritual power manifested in Jesus and cannot byt surrender to it in an act of pure confidence. In this manner the inner life of Jesus becomes the revelation of a redeeming reality making us conscious of an absolute moral will which has full control over the forces of nature.

It is thus by an inner act of direct appreciation that the absoluteness of an historical fact is established. But how does Herrmann relate the method of ordinary historical inquiry to this method of direct appreciation? Herrmann gives full scope to the scientific method in dealing with the Christian tradition. But it only gets at the mere husk of history, its facts and their relationship is his contention. Its core, the appropriation of experience by a personal self, is wholly beyond the historical method. The evaluational method (as the truly historical method) thus fills the gap. It is a strange situation two methods dealing with the same material, one of which makes it wholly relational, the other finding in it an absolute datum. And the most serious feature is that for the establishment of the fact of Jesus and his inner life Herrmann is dependent on the scientific method.

Summarizing now the outstanding features of Herrmann's view regarding the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity we have the following propositions.

(1) The content of the Christian religion to which ab-

solutness is ascribed by Herrmann, as compared with the absolute content of orthodox theology is greatly reduced. It consists in the transcendent will of perfect goodness, triumphant over nature, in the person of Jesus.

(2) To this content absoluteness attaches for two reasons, first because of its very nature as the highest redemptive good and secondly, because of its origin in a transcendent realm.[1]

(3) The affirmation of the absoluteness of Christianity is vindicated by an ethical philosophy of history which regards the realization of the moral law as the essence of history, and on the other hand by a special theory of knowledge able to cope with an essentially historical religion.[2]

(4) The scientific method is given full sway in dealing with Christian tradition, but it is forbidden to tresspass upon the absolute content of Christianity.

If we compare Herrmann's position with the position of experiential supernaturalism in regard to the question of absoluteness the outstanding differences seem to be these. (1) Herrmann's views rest on a Kantian philosophy of history which

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1. The meaning of absoluteness implied in the first phrase is that of perfection, permanence and singularity, the meaning of the second phrase is that of an underived content.
2. cf. the remark on page 22, footnote 3. The scientific method is applicable to all religions, which are purely phenomenal. The value judgment is demanded by the Christian religion as a non-phenomenal product.

has completely revolutionized the ecclesiastical conception of a redemptive history limiting thus the element of absoluteness to an ethical content. (2) In the second place the faith-epistemology of Ihmels gives way to a general epistemology of evaluation regarded as competent to justify the claim of absoluteness made by Christianity.

CHAPTER III

HEGLIANISM.

The types of theological thought remaining for our examination are products of the movement of thought called Absolute Idealism. Kant's critical analysis of the ideas of pure reason, the world, the soul, and God had considerably shaken the belief in the existence of transcendent objects. But instead of giving up the search for an unconditioned altogether, the attempt was made to locate it in the principle of reason itself instead of placing it outside of reason demanding reason to grasp it as an object external to itself. The unconditioned thus is made an immanent principle of Mind. Kant's own Critique of Judgment was an endeavor of this type to establish the unity of nature and mind, of reason and sense as an immanent principle of the world process. He was followed by Schelling and Hegel. The latter's Pan-Logism and the former's philosophy of Identity are forms of immanent absolutism.

The immanent approach to the unconditioned signifies a new epoch in the study of religion. The objective reference to transcendent objects in religion is replaced by the conception of religion as a particular type of human consciousness, organically one with the religious object.

It is easily seen that this type of religious thinking will formulate the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity in a very different manner from the types of thought previously

examined. The question now will be whether the Christian form of religious consciousness is absolutely perfect and unsurpassable.

In the writings of certain Hegelian theologians and of Schleiermacher we find other problems approached in this manner. It is to the solutions which they offer that we must turn. We shall again relate their views of absoluteness to their respective conceptions of history, wince this is the main interest we have in connection with this study.[1]

Hegelianism[2]

Religion for the Hegelian theologian is the consciousness of God or the Infinite natural to man in the form of thought or feeling.[3] The history of religions is the process of development

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1. cf.p. 6. Claim of absoluteness of Christianity - its historical character.
2. Hegel, Voelesungen uber die philosophie der Religion,1832.
   " , Voelesungen uber die Philsophie der Weltgeschichte.
   Biedermann, Christliche Dogmatik. 1869. 2nd ed. 1884-5.
   Lipsius, Lehrbuch der evangelisch protestantischen Dogmatik. 1876.
   O. Pfleiderer, Religion u Religionen. 1906.
   " , Religionsphilosophie auf geschichtlider Grundlage. 3rd ed. 1896.
   " , Die Ritschl'sche Theologie Kritisch beleuchtet. 1891.
   " , Evolution and Theology and other Essays.1900.
   Drews, Religion als Selbstbewusstsein Gottes. 1906.
   J. Caird, Introduction to the philosophy of Religion.
3. Christ Hegelianism would have said "in the form of imaginative, perceptual or reflective thought". But there are a number of Hegelian thinkers who do not limit religion to thought. For. O. Pleiderer religion is the consciousness of God in the form of the twofold feeling of freedomand dependence. (Evolution and Theology). Cf also J. Caird, Intr. to the Phil. of Rel. Chap. VI.; Lipsius, Lehrbuch d evangel. prot. Dogmatik. 46-60.

of the consciousness of God. In Christianity the process reaches its climax, and the religious consciousness finds its perfect and ultimate self-realization. The Christian religion thus is the absolute religion, while all the other religions are mere approximations to the goal. They are but "broken lights" of the nature of religion; the Christian religion is the perfect embodiment of the "truth" of religion.[1] The religious consciousness of sonship and the ethical consciousness of love as manifested in the founder of Christianity are the absolute fulfillment of the idea of religion. Christianity thus possesses the ultimate principle of religion although this principle may never be fully realized in the history of the Christian religion.[2]

In Hegelianism the affirmation of the absoluteness of the Christian form of religious consciousness rests on a religio-philosophical basis. The isolation of Christianity encountered in Orthodoxy and Ritschlianism is given up because of the idea of dual causality implied. The idea of evolution which is simply the causal principle applied to historical phenomenon does not allow any break or gaps in history. The same

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(Footnote 3 p.31 cont'd) Biederman, Christe. Dogmatik. 76. In regard to the phrase: natural to man cf. J. Caird, Intr. to the Phil. of Rel. Chap.IV, The Necessity of R Religion.

1. All forms of religion have in a certain sense an absolute aspect according to Hegelian theology. Religion is the absolute form of consciousness since it is the consciousness of the unity of subject and object. The knowledge and action consciousness is bipolar breaking up into subject and object, they are thus relative forms of consciousness. O. Pfleiderer, Evolution and Theology,p.135.
2. The absoluteness of the principle of Christianity must be distinquished from the absolute realization of the

principle of causal connection which holds for other historical events holds for the Christian religion. The scientific method therefore demands that Christianity as an historical religion should be placed side by side with other religions. There is no supernatural sign or spontaneous ethical causaton to prove its absoluteness.[1]

Rejecting miraculous causation, Hegelian theology turns to a comprehensive survey of the entire religious field.to establish the absoluteness of Christianity. It is the comparative study of religions which proves Christianity to be the very fulfulment of the truth of religion. The implication here is that all the other religions are relatively true while the whole meaning of religion as fully expressed is found only in Christianity. The opposition between Christianity and the other religions is thus abandoned. All religions form a continuous developmental process in which the final meaning, the absolute truth is at last realized. The comparative method moreover makes the content of the various religions central instead of the form of their origin. The question of the absoluteness of the Christian religion is decided not by reference to a special form of causation but by means of the excellence

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the principle. In the former sense Christianity is absolute, in the latter it is not.
cf. O. Pleiderer, Religion u. Religionen. p. 51.
, Evolution and Theology, p. 81.

1. The strongest and least ambiguous apponent of supernatural theology among the Hegelian theologians seems to be O. Pfleiderer. Cf. his Evolution and Theology, p. 2, p. 45, p. 9. and also Ritschl'sche Theologie. p. 94.

of its religious and moral contents when placed face to face with the contents of other religions.

From a consideration of the general basis on which the Hegelian approach to the question of absoluteness in religion rests let us now turn to the actual means and ways employed to establish Christianity as the absolute religion. The argument is of an historico-philosophical character.

History according to Hegelianism is the unfolding of an immanent reason. Its manifestations are found in such permanent historical phenomena as law, morality, art, science, religion. Every historical movement thus is the realization of a rational principle constituting its "essence".

This conception of history thus permits the distinction of the principle of a movement and its manifestation. The principle is the vital force from which a movement springs, and by which it is sustained, so as to constitute it a continuous process. The manner of its manifestation depends on the environment.[1] Principle and manifestation are described as soul and

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1. Lipsius' definition of principle is found in 160 of his Lehrbuch der ev. prot. Dogmatik. "Unter Princip" versteht man ungefähr eine innere geistige Einheit, aus welcher eine Mannichfaltig keit von Merkmalen eines Gangen oder ein zu einem Ganzen ver-bundener Complex von verschiedenartigen Erscheinungen erklart wird". The whole and its principle are related as soul and body, as inner and outer, as ideal and real, as essence and reality. (Wirklichkeit). "Das Princip einer Religion ist also seine blosse "Idee" wenn man Idee im Sinne eines bloss vorbildlichen Inhalts nimmt , es ist nicht bloss Norm, sondern zugleich lebendige geistige Macht, nicht bloss ein Sollen sondern zugleicht ein Sein, welches sich als innerer Grund der Erscheinungen betatigt."

body, inner and outer, core and husk.

As applied to the problem at issue the distinction between a principle and its manifestation means that Christianity as a religious principle may be looked upon as absolute while its manifestation as conditioned by a certain intellectual, social and political environment has to be considered relative.

Historical persons are the bearers of principles. As persons they are purely relative conditioned by the times in which they live. The person belongs to the imperfect, untrue, contradictory side of things. The principle the person expresses on the other hand might belong on the side of the permanent and the true. Hegelian theology could look upon Jesus therefore as conditioned by his environment. It could find in him a truly historical person, while at the same time affirming the absoluteness of the principle manifested in his religious and moral consciousness.[1] It is thus to the universal as over against the particular to which absoluteness attaches.

Another idea of vital importance for the establishment of Christianity as the absolute religion is the Hegelian conception of historical change. The historical process is the gradual unfolding of principles by means of a causal and teleo-

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(Footnote 1 p.34 Cont'd)
A.E. Biedermann, Christliche Dogmatik, 148.1. "einheitliche Triebkraft", "Seele der Lebensausserungen". O. Pfleiderer, Evolution and Theology, p. 25, p. 30, p. 81.

1. Ol Pfleiderer, Evolution and Theology, p.82.

logical arrangement. The history of religions must be viewed therefore as a series of unfoldings in which the chain of causes is at the same time the purposive approach toward a goal. The idea of organic development enables us to interpret Christianity as the outcome of a process of development teleologically directed. All that was contained in the most primitive form of religious consciousness in a germ like manner has come to full fruition in the Christian religion. Hegelian theology instead of opposing the causal method of science in dealing with Christian history as Supernaturalism and Ritschlianism to makes use of it. By means of the ordinary conditions of history the idea pursues its march towards its final goal. On the other hand the causal chain is more than a mere causal chain, it is a teleological process. It is its purposive character which saves the historical movement from pure relationism. The relational complex finds wholeness and self-consistency through the idea of a goal.[1, 2]

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1. The later followers of Hegel in theology refrain from interpreting the process of organic development as a dialectic process in the Hegelian sense. (Thesis - antithesis - synthesis). They insist on the teleological character of the process. The end works itself out through the causal network. But the particular nature of the process finds no analysis.
   The reason for this neglect of the Hegelian idea of dialectic is probably to be ascribed to the interest which these men have in the final result of the process. Hegel was more interested in the process itself. The process as such in its character of constant disintegration and reconciliation was the value aspect for him. cf. E. Troeltsch, Historismus, p.246. Troeltsch in his brilliant exposition of the meaning of the Hegelian dialectic makes an attempt to overcome the common misunderstanding of Hegel's method as a form of a priori deduction of actual historical contents. Hegel's dialectic

The certainty in religion in general and in Christian religion in particular is logical according to Hegelian theology. The dualistic epistemology of experiential Supernaturalism and Ritschlianism is repla ced by a monistic form of epistemology. The conviction of the absoluteness of Christianity is a rational conviction resting on the rationality of the God-consciousness in general and on the comparative survey of the history of religions.

The truth of the consciousness of God is shown by its necessity. The idea of the Infinite has the same immediate certainty about it as is found in sense perception.[1] But moreover the idea of the Infinite overcomes the opposites of self and world, spirit and nature, individual and society and thus turns out to be the highest principle of integration.

The truth of Christianity cannot be established by means of a special theory of knowledge. It rests on the higher type of integration Christianity gives to the religious and moral

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was meant to be the formulation of a law at work in the concrete given contents of history. E. Troeltsch, Historismus, Chap. III, 2.

2.(page 36). Christianty as the ultimate principle of the religious consciousness is not the common element of all religions. The principle of Christianity cannot be found by abstracting from all the differences of religious and retaining what they have in common. The principle is not the abstract universal. Cf.J.Caird, Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, pp.75 ff.

1. O. Pfleiderer, Ritschl's Theologie, p. 21. and Evolution and Theology, p. 146.
J. Caird, Introduction the the Philosophy of Religion, pp. 79 ff.

contents. "It removes the one-sidedness and sums up the religious inclinations of mankind in an essentially true and satisfactory manner."[1]

Before going on to the views of Schleiermacher let us review the results of our study of Hegelian theology in regard to our problem.

(1) The question of the absoluteness of Christianity is reduced to the question of the historical possibility of an ultimate form of religious consciousness.

(2) The affirmative answer is given to this question on the basis of a philosophy of history, which regards universal principles as the forces of history and combines with the idea of causal connection the idea of purposive direction.

(3) The Hegelian philosophy of history instead of being hostile to the ordinary genetic method of secular history as Supernaturalism and Ritschlianism accepts it utilizes it, but transforms it. (Sec. 2)

(4) The conviction of the absoluteness of the Christian religion rests neither on a special form of religious experience nor on a supernatural form of appreciation. It is a perfectly logical conviction.

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1. O. Pfleiderer, Evolution and Theology, p.156.
J. Caird, Intr. to the Philsophy of Religion, p. 343.
"Thus, whatever elements of truth, whatever broken and scattered rays of light the old religions contained, Christianity takes up into itself, expalining all, harmonizing all, by a divine alchemy transmuting all, yet immeasurably transcending all."

CHAPTER IV

SCHLEIERMACHER

In dealing with Schleiermacher's[1] attitude towards the question of the absoluteness of Christianity we shall neglect those aspects which he has in common with Hegelian theology, e.g., the immanent approach to religion and his use of the comparative method.[2] All we intend to do is to analyze his view of history and its significance for the absoluteness of Christianity.

Two main conceptions are developed by Schleiermacher in regard to our problem. The first edition of his "Reden uber die Religion" and the section on the Philosophy of Religion in his "Der christliche Glaube" contain his earlier viewpoint least influenced by ecclesiastical doctrine. The sections of his "Der christliche Blaube" dealing with the doctrine of Christ reveal a different attitude. Let us now examine these views in succession.

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1. F.E.D. Schleiermacher, Ueber die Religion. ed by R.Otto. 4th ed. 1920.
   , Monologen nebst den Vorarbeiten, ed by.F.M.Schiele.2nd ed.by H. Mulert. 1914.
   , Dialektik. ed.by L.Jonas. 1839.
   , Dialektik. ed.by J.Halpern.1903.
   Georg Wehrung, Die Dialektik Schleiermachers. 1920.
   F.E.D. Schleiermacher, Der Christliche Glaube.
   H. Mulert, Schleiermachers Geschichtsphilosophische Ansichten in ihrer Bedentung für seine Theologie. 1907.
2. Fr. Schleiermacher, Ueber die Religion, ed.by R.Otto. 4th ed. 1920.

Religion is an historical phenomenon and as such has all the characteristics of history.[1] Now history is the realm of individuality. The particular features of institutions and of mental products constitute the essence of the historical process.[2] The history of religions is thus the display of a number of individual forms of religiosity. A particular intuition of the Universe and connected with it a particular fusion of the feelings of dependence and independence gives each form its specific quality.

Each religion as an individual whole is infinite, it is independent of other forms of religion for its completion. In every historical form of piety, religion is grasped in its wholeness.[3]

The conception of particular religions as infinite in-

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1. Religion for Schleiermacher has also a transcendental or superhistorical nature. But as a mere a priori (feeling of absolute independence) it is merely potential. It is the a priori, the feeling of absolute dependence as realized under definite empirical conditions which constitutes actual religion.
2. Ancient civilizations (Chinese e.g.) as lacking the principle of individuality are less historical than our modern civilization. In the animal kingdom we get below the realm of history since it lack the principle of individuality and knows only universals. Schleiermacher is the true son of Romanticism in his view of history. "Ueber die Religion", pl 120, p.65.
3. "Ueber die Religion",p. 188.

dividual totalities excludes for Schleiermacher the idea of a teleological connection between the different religions. Each religion is a self-contained achievement lacking all connection with or dependence on others. We must now look upon the history of religions as a teleological series in which the last contains the meaning of the preceding forms. Schleiermacher sometimes speaks of the system of religions. This expression indicates that each religion is an integral part of religion in its infinity. But it does not involve a teleological sequence of forms of religion.

What now is the bearing of Schleiermacher's philosophy of history with its emphasis on individuality and non-teleological connection on the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity? It implies the absoluteness as well as the relativity of the Christian religion paradoxical as this may sound. Christianity like every other articulate religion forms an individual totality. It rests on a particular religious intuition and feeling which is absolutely perfect in its own way. But this perfection or absoluteness does not put Christianity in a class all by itself making it the religion, and moreover it is not absolute in the sense of being the final religion.[1] Conditions may change to such an extent that the central intuition of Christianity will no longer be understood, and then a new form of religion may arise. As an individual form of religious conscious-

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1. "Ueber die Religion", pp. 186-189. p.160.

ness Christianity like every other religion is relative in the sense of being conditioned by the mental, social, political and economic aspects of the age in which it originated and grew up. Again the rejection of teleology an Schleiermacher's part prevents him from interpreting Christianity as the only and final truth of religion of which all the other religions are relative approximations, transmiting and perfecting these partial truths in an ultimate manner.

But there is a second line of thought which terminates in the conception of Christianity as the final, perfect and unsurpassable form of religious and ethical consciousness. As an adherent of the Philsophy of Identity Schleiermacher looked upon the historical process as the gradual objectification of reason and spiritualization of nature.[1] This process he assumes has reached its climax in the Christ of the Church as an historical person. He is the ideal or typical man different from all others. Essential sinlessness and absolute perfection are attributed to him.[2] Thus we find in Jesus a God-consciousness which is absolutely unique. The historical individual in this manner is transformed into the universal type, for which the particular conditions of the age do not count, being as such unsurpassable and final. There can hardly be any doubt as to the arbitrariness of this whole procedure by which Schleiermacher fits a traditional doctrine of the Church into a particular

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1. Schleiermachers Dialektik, ed. by Halpern, pp.340-341.
2. "Der Christliche Glaube", 98.

kind of philosophy of history. It is an "attempt to make the ecclesiastical Christ acceptable to the spirit of the modern world" as G.B. Foster says, but by no means the last.[1]

The certainty which attaches to the Christian religion is non-rational, subjective, and immediate. The test of different religions values is the general response called out in us. The religion in which we find ourselves will be the highest for us.[2] The absoluteness of the person of Jesus, as expressing the typical God-consciousness, is indeed the outcome of a logical construction of history, but the acknowledgment is wholly subjective and non-rational. Christian experience does not carry with it an absolute certainty of religious objects. It is not used by Schleiermacher to overcome the relativizing tendencies of historical science.

The outcome of our examination of Schleiermacher's views in regard to our problem may be summed up in the following propositions.

(1) According to one line of argument Schleiermacher claims absoluteness in the strict sense of finality for the religious and ethical consciousness of the historical Jesus.

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1. It seems to me that Schleiermacher's and Herrmann's Christology constitute parallels. In both cases the absoluteness or uniqueness of the person of Jesus is made acceptable by a special type of Philosophy of History - the Philosophy of Identity in case of Schleiermacher, the Kantian Philosophy in Herrmann's case and both cases mean the de-historizing of the person of Jesus.
   G.B.Foster, The Finality of the Christian Religion, p.34.
2. Reden uber die Religion, p. 62.

This result is reached by universalizing the person of Jesus and transforming him into the type of the ideal man. A special type of philosophy of history grown in the soil of the philosophy of identity furnishes the foundation for this interpretation of the person of Jesus.

(2) As long as Schleiermacher makes the principle of individuality central in his historical thinking a relativistic estimate of religions including Christianity is found. All that absoluteness on this basis means is the wholeness and completion of each form of religion. But the perfection of one form of religion does neither exclude its disappearance in time nor the peffection of other forms.

(3) The evaluation of religions on the basis of the comparative method is free from the logical necessity of Hegelian theology, it consists in a personal emotional response.

Summary

Our short review of the main conceptions of the absoluteness of Christianity has made it clear that the problem of absoluteness is a very complex one.

The problem itself arises out of our modern historical way of thinking, which finds it extremely difficult to combine the claim of absoluteness which Christianity makes with its historical character on which it is just as insistent.[1] Can

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1. Troeltsch, Der Historismus u. seine Probleme. Chap.I,2. "The modern origin of the philosophy of history", pp. 11 ff.

the claim of possessing the absolute truth about God, man and the world be harmonized with an historical mode of thought is the question.

But although the general meaning of the problem is clear the question as to what constitutes the absoluteness of Christianity is by no means answered in the same manner. The question as we have seen is linked up with various conceptions of what constitutes the real nature of the Christian religion. Two outstanding views we have referred to. (1) To the Supernaturalist and the Ritschlian Christianity is a divine donation to man through historical device. Its absoluteness is therefore identical with its supernatural to transcendent origin. (2) The Hegelian theologian on the other hand and Schleiermacher look upon Christianity as the result of an inner ripening of the religious and ethical consciousness of mankind. Absoluteness in this case means fulfilment , perfection, finality. The question here is that of the ultimate validity of the Christian form of religious and ethical consciousness.

Since the quality of absoluteness in both cases attaches to an historical situation, the solution of the problem rests on historical means. Naturally thus we are led into the logic and philosophy of history. The main issues arising in this connection are the following.

(1). For Supernaturalism and Ritschlianism the aim is to escapt the consequences of the ordinary scientific method

applied by secular history.[1] The absoluteness of Christianity is maintained on the ground of a dual form of causality. Ritschlianism as expressed by Herrmann has complicated the problem of dual causality still more by going back to the Kantian causality of freedom.

Idealistic theology on the other hand welcomes the genetic method of modern historical sicence. But it supplements it by introducing the principle of teleology. The historical process thus becomes a movement towards a goal although realizing itself through a strictly causal chain. The underpinning of the causal principle by the teleological makes thus for the interpretation of Christianity as a goal of a process of evolution.

(2) History allows the use of universals. And therefore we are entitled to abstract from particular conditions. As a relative phenomenon Christianity also has a universal aspect. It is this universal aspect, its essence as over against its temporary form which makes it absolute, so Hegelianism holds. Our problem thus involves the whole question of the relation of the universal to the particular in History, and raises the the question whether history allows any other universal except that of causal connection.

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1. It is impossible at this stage in our discussion to raise the question as to the meaning of the historical method. It must be taken in its general significance. Immanent causal connection, genetic derivation, gradual development are its chief slogans.

The problem just mentioned is exceedingly important considering that all the views maintaining the absoluteness of Christianity which we have examined, base their assertion on some universal or other which they find in Christianity. Hegelianism has its principle of Christianity. Herrmann although insisting on the individuality of historical phenomenon turns his truly historical person into a universal being and makes him the typical exemplar of the realization of the moral. Schleiermacher establishes the absoluteness of Christianity by making its founder the universal man, the archetype of what really constitutes human nature.

(3) If Schleiermacher in his "Ueber die Religion" is right in making the category of individuality central for history it would seem that the assertion of the absoluteness of Christianity is hardly tenable. It is therefore essential to the solution of our problem to investigate into the exact meaning of historical individuality.

Our survey of the various methods used for the solution of the problem of absoluteness has also brought to light the epistemological complications involved. Hegelianism assumes that the claim of the absoluteness of Christianity rests on logical grounds and can be demonstrated objectively. Supernaturalistic Rationalism also relies on rational conviction. Ritschlianism holds on the other hand that history must make use of appreciation as a means of ascertaining absolute truth. Experiential supernaturalism takes refuge in a specifically

Christian theory of knowledge to maintain the absoluteness of Christianity. Schleiermacher again appeals to a subjective and immediate response of the mind.

As we pass on to our study proper - the examination of Troeltsch's view of the absolutness of Christianity - we shall notice that all these factors enter into Troeltsch's discussion of the problem and the method of its solution.

DIVISION II.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TROELTSCH'S VIEWS CONCERNING ABSOLUTENESS OF CHRISTIANITY

1.

The conceptions of the absoluteness of Christianity in Protestant theology sketched in the first division constitute Troeltsch's inheritance on the basis of which he develops his own views. Our endeavor in this division will be to trace the <u>various formulations of the problem</u> of the absolutaness of Christianity entertained by Troeltsch and <u>the methods</u> employed in the effort to find a solution, arising out of that inheritance. For the sake of fuller orientation our sketch of the development of Troeltsch's views of the problem of absoluteness will be preceded by two short statements concerning the <u>chief aim of Troeltsch's theological and philosophical</u> work and <u>his general theological and philosophical development</u> respectively.

2.

The theories dealing with the establishment of the absoluteness of Christianity examined in the first division fall into two classes as far as their attitude towards Science and Philosophy is concerned. Experiential Supernaturalism, Ritschlianism and Schleiermacher, at least in certain phases of his thought, maintain the absolutness of Christianity independently of Science and Philosophy. Rationalistic Supernaturalism, Hegelianism and Schleiermacher in his Ethics on the other hand prove the absoluteness of Christianity by means of rational procedures

of thought. The former emphasize the antagonism or the independence of Science and Religion, Philosophy and Faith, the latter make their unity central. Now Troeltsch follows the second group. As the heir of classic German Idealism his chief aim is to maintain the unity of life, the harmony of Religion and Culture, of Christianity and Philosophy.[1]

Let us quote two passages from Troeltsch's writings which express his goal as a theological and philosophical thinker.

In the Preface to the second volume of his Gesammelte Schriften we find this statement: (p.VII).

"What I have in mind this volume will make sufficiently clear: it is a relativ ely conservative system of the conservation and concentration of our religious forces on the basis of a critical Transcendentalism, which guarantees the harmonious relationship of Religion and scientific thought on the one hand and the independent movement of Religion on the other".
And on p. 227 of the same volume Troeltsch admits that his chief interest had always been the critical analysis of culture and religion and not the traditional handing down and apologetic defense of specifically Christian theological ideas.

The harmony of Science and Religion and the independence

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1. Philosophy in the widest sense as defined by J. Wendland is "Methodical reflection concerning the tendencies expressing themselves in our mental life, our Science and Literature, ~~an~~ political, economic and aesthetic life." (2 Th.K. 1914, p.130) It is in this sense that we are using it.

of Religion are thus the key-notes of his position.

Even in his early writings when the Ritschlian tradition predominates with him the aim of establishing friendly relationships between Science and Religion lurks in the background. Ritschlianism for the sake of maintaining the independence of Christianity had assumed a perfectly negative attitude towards Philosophy and Science. It showed that philosophic and scientific thought must forever remain agnostic concerning the ultimate questions of life and reality. Troeltsch on the contrary even as a Ritschlian used Philosophy in a positive manner availing himself of certain forms of philosophic thought for the establishment of the truth of Christianity. Although interested in the independence of Religion as a unique phenomenon of human life, Troeltsch is also greatly interested in maintaining friendly relationships between Religion and Philosophy, between Christianity and Culture, i.e., the fundamental economic, political, social and scientific thoughts of modern times.[1]

Troeltsch's view of History as embodied in his historical writings also throws light on the main ambition of his scholarly pursuits. From the very beginning he chooses those historical situations for his investigations which show the significance of Reason for the historical process. In his "Veruunft und Offenbarung bei Johann Gerhardt u. Phil. Melauchtton" he

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1. E. Troeltsch, "Die Christliche Weltauschauung und ihre Gegenstromungen". Schriften II, p.227.

points out that the great intellectual endeavor of the early Lutheran theologians was to find a satisfactory interpretation of the relationship of reason and revelation. Their distinctions of supernatural and natural truth have become invalid for our thinking so he holds. His essays on the "Enlightenment" "Deism" and "Idealism"[1] trace the emergence of the theological and religious modern age, of Neo-Protestantism to the changes of the Rationalistic Philosophy of Descartes, Bayle and Leibnitz, rather than to an independent influence of the Lutheran Reformation. The question of deepest concern for Troeltsch is to inquire into the relationships which Christianity has been able to establish with the great rational forces embodied in secular culture.

The significance of this general aim of Troeltsch's theological efforts for his way of dealing with the question of the absoluteness of Christianity consists in this, that it puts the problem in close contact with all the secular methods of Science and Philosophy engaged in the pursuit of truth.

3. .

The twofold aim of establishing the closest relationship between Science and Religion and of securing the free movement of Religion Troeltsch finally attempts to realize on the basis of critical transcendentalism. It is as adherent of this type of philosophy that he reaches the viewpoint most

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1. E. Troeltsch, "Aufklarung",) in R.E.
. "Deismus",)
. "Idealismus", Deutscher")

characteristic of him. Our subsequent study of Troeltsch's approach to the problem of the absolutaness of Christianity will deal exclusively with the phase of his thought which is the result of his critical transcendtalism. Since this stage of his philosophical development was reached about 1900 we are justified in dividing his development into two periods, the years preceding 1900 covering his writings from 1891 till 1900 and the years between 1900 and 1923 the year of his death.

The change which takes place in Troeltsch's philosophical attitude is described by himself as the change from the philosophy of Dilthey and Lotze to the philosophy of Windelband and Rickert.[1] Ed.v. Hartmann, J. Volkelt, L. Busse, A. Lange, Fechner and Paulsen are also mentioned among his philosophic authorities during the nineties.[2] The most outstanding characteristic of his early philosophy is the interest in objective Reality. He is dissatisfied with the Kantianism of the Ritschlian School which expects to solve all metaphysical difficulties by means of the theory of the phenomenal character of nature. He puts a transcendental Realism in its place. Knowledge he holds arises through the interaction between the Self and a transsubjective world.[3,4]

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 227.
2. " " " ", p.246.
3. " " " ", pp.245-246.
4. " " , 2 Th K, VIII, pp.52-53. "Geschichte und Metaphysik". (1898)
   " " , 2 Th K, VI (1895-96) pp. 91-92. "Die Selbstandigkeit der Religion"..

The transcendental Realism of Troeltsch maintains itslef also in the face of the strong influx of Hegelianism in the essay on the "Metaphysik und Geschichte".[1] It becomes however more closely connected with an idealistic, teleological Evolutionism of History. The transsubjective world discloses itself as an independent spiritual life breaking forth at different points in history.[2] His views of the spiritual life greatly resemble the views of Class his former teacher and Eucken.

About the year 1900 Troeltsch abandons his transcendental Realism and replaces it by the critical Transcendentalism of Wiadelband and Rickert.[3] His interest shifts from the real object of knowledge to the knowing subject. Scientific objectivity and validity now means the compulsion we experience in arranging the variety of our consciouscontents according to certain superindividual and superempirical categories instead of the apprehension of an independent object.

Following his transcendental Realism Troeltsch establishes the unity of Science and Religion, of Philosophy and Christianity by showing that Religion and Science, Christianity and Philosophy apprehend the same Object although the mode of apprehension differs. On the basis of his critical Transcendentalism he finds their harmonious relationship in the fact

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1. E. Troeltsch, "Metaphysik und Geschichte" in Z Th K.1898.
2. " " " " " " " pp. 28,32,41.
3. " " , Schriften II. p. 227.

that the different categorical orders, the logical, the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious have the same root, the same "Vernunftkern".

Since the theological development will become sufficiently clear in connection with the next point in which we expect to enumerate the various attitudes of Troeltsch towards the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity all we need to say about it in this connection is that he takes his starting point from Ritschl from whom he inherited the idea of the independence and selfsufficient validity of religious experience and that he more and more approaches the religio-philosophical interpretation of religion as a result of his contacts with Schleiermacher, Hegelianism and the moders historical method.

4.

During the period of his adherence to transcendental Realism Troeltsch develops three different forms of approach to the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity. We shall designate them as the theological, the philosophical and the religio-philosophical method.

The theological and the philosophical approach to the truth of Christianity have found expression in Troeltsch's essay on "Die Christliche Weltauschauung und ihre Gegenströmuungen". Since his theological method as embodied in this essay is thoroughly Ritschlian and as such shows very few features which are original with him it seems needless to reproduce his

position in full. A few short statements will suffice.

Christianity is looked upon as a principle of faith involving a general religious and ethical interpretation of God, the World, and Man.[1] Two considerations demand the absoluteness of this principle. First of all Christian faith is concerned with the highest and ultimate good of Personality. As the religion of perfect, transcendent personality it implies absoluteness. In the second place in its character as faith

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1. Troeltsch makes a distinction between the ideational expression of Christianity, its embodiment in forms of cult and organization and its principle. It is the principle as the universal aspect of Christianity which is absolute, while its ideational formulation, its cult and organization as conditioned by the intellectual, social, economic and political forces of an agseare relative. Esp. Gesammelte, Schriften II, 280. also pp.228-9.

It is also to be noted that Herrmann to Troeltsch differ as to the relation of faith and its object. Troeltsch is just as much interested in an object of faith, a transcendent Reality as Herrmann. But he finds this object in the form of beliefs, appreciations, ideas about it. Jesus has practical, religious view of God, Man, the World which have the character of absolute truth. For Herrmann the good will of the person of Jesus is the direct object of faith, it is the redemptive fact to which the Christian responds by an act of faith. This essential difference between Herrmann and Troeltsch makes for their difference of attitude towards the question of absoluteness as finally developed. For Herrmann the object of faith enters into history, for Troeltsch the object remains behind the veil of ideas, appreciations, intepretations, Troeltsch's view therefore lends itself more easily towards the relativizing of the content of Christian faith.

or personal communism with God it requires absoluteness. For God is "Being itself, the center of Reality, the Absolute in the eternal flux and becoming of relatively conditioned events and finite occurrences."[1]

The absolute truth of the Christian principle of faith is affirmed on the basis of its origin. It is the product of divine revelation. Christianity is "the absolute and permanent truth, perfect and unsurpassable for man because it is founded in absolute divine revelation."[2] It is not the achievement of a purely immanent evolutionary process but the opening up of a unique personal life and stands in complete opposition to all other religions and forms of faith.[3]

The proof for the absoluteness of Christianity rests on its own claim of being the absolute religion and on the inner experience which it bestows. The claim everywhere associated with the Christian faith is essential characteristic and an ultimate datum. The most amazing feature about the person of Jesus is his messianic consciousness, the claim of being the completion of all preceding acts of God and his final revelation. As a unique phenomenon in the history of religions the consciousness of Jesus speaks for itself and can only be interpreted by assuming that in Jesus we have an influx of the supersensible world, a creative relation to God.[4]

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 285, p. 311.
2. " " " , p. 301.
3. Ibid, p. 301.
4. Ibid, pp.321-323.

Moreover Christian experience carries the certainty of finality within itself. Christian faith has an epistemology all its own. Its validity is self-sufficient.[1]

Since Christianity as a form of faith has a certainty all its own it does not need any positive scientific or philosophic corroboration. Troeltsch in truly Ritschlian fashion thus points out that the idea of evolution as applied to history is unable to overthrow the idea of divine revelatory intervention at a definite point in time. The idea of evolution is applicable merely to the phenomenal side of historical events. It is a valuable tool for dealing with the actual phenomenal contents after they have been produced in a process. The noumenal side of history however is wholly sealed up and impenetrable for the genetic method. Only religious faith can penetrate into the ultimate sources of the historic process insofar as it manifests the Supersensible.[2] The religious use of history thus is different from the scientific use and cannot be destroyed by the latter.[3, 4]

With this Ritschlian theological method of establishing the absoluteness of Christianity Troeltsch connects a philosophical method of approach. The two methods must be looked upon as complementary. The same transsubjective object which Christian faith is dealing with and the Reality Science and

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p.324.
2. Ibid, p. 316.
3. Ibid, p. 317.
4. The outstanding significance of the theological method is (1) its emphasis on the inner claim of Christianity as revelation which makes it absolutely unique in the history of religions and in the second place (2) its

Philosophy are studying is identical, only our modes of apprehension are different. The Ritschlian distinction of theoretic and practical reason are absolutely antagonistic is abandoned.

Thought and faith lead to harmonious results because both have their source in the depth of human nature which is ultimately one.[1] Troeltsch argues that if Christian faith is a true expression of human nature and has any truth about it, human thought should of itself be led to interpretations harmonizing with it through the inner consistency of the content.

Troeltsch finds Christian faith as a comprehensive religious and ethical interpretation of the world corroborated by metaphysical Idealism and intuitionistic Ethics.

Metaphysical Idealism in its inductive form as profounded by Lotze, Fechner, Paulsen, Wundt, conceives of ultimate reality, the other-than-self, through the interaction of which with ourselves knowledge and experience arises as of the nature of mind. The priority of mind thus is established by means of logical considerations.[2]

To this ultimate reality philosophic Ethics adds the idea of mind as the absolute and underivable value. Ethics finds itself face to face with the antimony of imperatives valid through themselves and of an ideal, all embracing and

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reliance on the practical certainty of Christian experience which is independent of scientific or philosophic reasoning.

1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p.240.
2. Ibid, p. 247.

realizable only through these imperatives. What is needed therefore is that the ends, or the end we pursue in our actions be related to the motive, the categorical imperative which controls the act. In other words we must have the assurance that our purposes and ends lend themselves to the fulfillment of our duty, that the pure heart, the undefiled motive is not a stranger in the world of ends. Now this antimony can find its solution only if we assume an intelligible unity of Reason lying beyond and behind human consciousness, which embraces within itself the categorical imperative and the ultimate end of action.[1] Philosophic Ethics thus is in full agreement with Christian faith which places the source of moral obligation as well as the absolute end of action, the establishment of a kingdom of redeemed persons, in the holy will of a transcendent God.

Although Philosophy finds solutions which are in perfect harmony with the interpretations of Christian faith, there is nevertheless a difference between them as to the kind of validity achieved. Troeltsch's philosophic method in dealing with the content which is also the content of Christian faith cannot be said to be one which fully establishes the absolute truth of Christianity.[2] The relation between faith and reason in regard to the question of the absoluteness of Christianity turns out to be antimonic. What Philosophy establishes in hypothetical form faith possesses as absolute. Faith can live

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 259.
2. Ibid, p. 318.

in the full assurance of the absoluteness of its content in the face of logical difficulties.[1] On the other hand Reason even though it have the same content as Faith can never overcome the character of probability and find absolute certainty. The one attitude can never merge into the other, no rational endeavor can ever overcome the distinctive character of the two viewpoints, their relationship will always remain antinomic.

The appearance of his essay "Die Selbstandigkeit der Religion" marks a turning-point in the development of Troeltsch's theological methodology. Instead of approaching Christianity dogmatically or metaphysically he begins to approach it religio-philosophically from the year 1895 on. In addition to the essay just referred to his viewpoint finds expression in the following essays: "Christentum und Religiousgeschichte" (1897), "Geschichte u. Metaphysik" (1989), "Ueber historische u. Dogmatische Methode in der Theologie" (1898), and "Die wissenschaftliche Loge und ihre Auferderungen an die Theologie", (1900)

Let us briefly examine what Troeltsch's religio-philosophical method is before his acceptance of critical transcendentalism and what effect it had on his attitude towards the question of the absoluteness of Christianity.

The religio-philosophical method in dealing with Christianity is necessitated by the modern change from the dogmatic

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 270.

to the historical method in the interpretation and evaluation of historical phenomena. Troeltsch draws the distinction between these two methods as different in principle on the basis of his historical inquiries into the meaning and development of the modern mind on the one hand and his familiarity with Ritschlianism on the other hand. The modern age is characterized by its extension of the Kantian distinction between Dogmatism and Criticism in the field of Metaphysics and Epistemology to the field of History. Ritschlianism does not see the full significance of this change according to Troeltsch. It is thus the outstanding example of historical dogmatism in the realm of Theology.

The dogmatic method is interested in binding man to particular facts of history which have the character of absolute authority.[1] In theology it assumes that Christian experience has immediate access to the reality and the evaluation of such facts. A supernatural tradition and the inner assurance of faith is adequate proof for the absolute truth of these facts. For the dogmatic method these facts have no analogy in history and constitute a special realm altogether different in character from other historical facts. Moreover, these facts have no relationships with other facts of history.

The dogmatic method thus is the very opposite of the modern historical method. (1) For the modern historian realizes

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 740.

that the judgments he arrives at can never get beyond the character of probability. Historical criticism the uncertainty of all historical facts is the necessary implication.[1] (2) The principle of analogy moreover demands that all history be looked upon as similar in character. The same principles operatime in the origin and development of traditions and myths prevail everywhere in history.[2] (3) And finally all historical phenomena are thought of as arising from the interaction of correlated forces. There are no isolated wholly detached facts for modern history anywhere.[3]

The significance of the historic method for the study of Christianity as over against the dogmatic method is that it does not allow us to found the absolute truth of Christianity on particular historical facts held to be indubitably certain. It is impossible to fall back on any wholly unrelated, detached facts. "The connection of religious faith with any particular fact is severed."[4] Both the explanation and the evaluation of history has to take its startingpoint from the general interconnections of the historical process. The history of Christianity thus must be made part and parcel of the history of religions on the one hand and of the history of civilization on the other. "Every moment and every phenomenon of history can be thought only in its general connections with other phenomena and finally the entire historical process. The

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, pp. 731-732.
2. Ibid, p. 732.
3. Ibid, p. 733.
4. Ibid, p. 736.

establishment of standards of value thus cannot proceed from the isolated particular phenomenon but only from a survey of the whole field."[1]

The historical method places Christianity along side of all the other religions and wholly submerges it in the historical process, abandoning all endeavors to isolate it from the general historical process. Theology therefore, if it wishes to satisfy the demands of the modern mind must change its method of approach to Christianity. The new method which Troeltsch proposes he calls the religio-philosophical method. It definitely rejects the isolation of Christianity and approaches the question of the truth of Christianity by making it part of the religious history of the race. The religio-philosophical method proceeds along two lines, the psychological and the historico-philosophical.

The psychology of religion brings to light the independent character of religion. At the root of religion we find as Troeltsch holds an intuition of an infinite personal power. Religion thus is different in character from morality, art, science and philosophy.[2] This intuition which is the source of all religion and which finds expression in the immediate consciousness of revelation makes all religions genuine religion. The distinctions of natural and supernatural, false and true in the field of religion must be given up.

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 737.
2. E. Troeltsch, Die Selbständigkeit der Religion, 2 Th K. 1895, p. 397., Vol. V., p.396. pp.390, 397, 406, 413, 415.

The religions which have appeared in history are the more or less perfect expressions of this ideal perception or intuition of the Absolute. The worth and the value of certain forms of religion can be decided only by a historico-philosophical inquiry. Troeltsch thus abandons the direct metaphysical establishment of the truth of the Christian religion. (cf. his philosophical method). It is by means of the philosophy of history that he attempts to prove the superior worth of Christianity. Troeltsch falls back on the Hegelian type of Philosophy of History. History is an evolutionary process. It is the gradual unfolding of "germinative" principles in a teleological manner.[1] The history of religions thus appears as a teleological process in which a final goal finds realization, and not a mere chaos of absolutely unrelated phenomena.[2] But the idea of the teleological development of religion does not permit us to construe the final goal in advance. No ready made standard of evaluation is furnished. History works towards the concrete individuation of principles and thus never shows the principle in its purity.[3]

Although the teleological evolutionism referred to does not permit the construction of a final goal of the religious history of manking it gives us the assurance that by entrusting ourselves to the actual religious contents that have

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1. E.Troeltsch, "Metaphysik und Geschichte" 2 Th K, VIII, 1898, pp. 56-57.
2. E. Troeltshh,"Die Selbständigkeit der Religion, 2 Th K 1896, Vol. VI. p. 73.
3. Ibid, pp. 76, 79

arisen in the course of history we shall find the highest and absolutely perfect form of religion among those already existing. One of the concrete embodiments of the ideal perception of the "absolute" may be found to be the actual goal of the historic process. The stamdard for the evaluation of religions arises thus whithin the process of comparison.[1] And it will be found, so Treltsch holds, that Christianity as the religion of redemption is the absolute religion.[2]

With the Hegelian type of immanent teleological evolutionism Troeltsch connects the view of a "transcendent objective historical Idealism". In the historical process an independent self-contained "Spiritual Life" unfolds itself.[3] Man can appropriate this higher spiritual life or he can refuse to do so. History thus becomes the interplay or interaction of forces belonging to two different realms, a divine and a human. Troeltsch transplants his transcendental realism from Reality in general to the historical realm. His philosophy of history is a strange combination of Hegelian immanent Idealism and "objective realistic Idealism" of the Class and Eucken type.

The history of religions is thus a process in which a realistic religious object unfolds or reveals itself. It is the devine-human aspect of history which allows us to look

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1. E. Troeltsch, Die Selbständigkeit der Religion, 2 th 1896, Vol. VI, pp.215-1216.
2. Ibid, pp. 79, 167, 169.
3. Ibid. p. 110.

upon the history of religions as a "progressive revelation of God".

The perfect revelation of the "Spiritual Life" is found where the consciousness of divine communication is most clearly expressed. Since Christianity has this characteristic it is to be regarded as the absolute religion.[1]

Troeltsch's acceptance of the religio-philosophical method in dealing with the truth of Christianity does not alter his views of certainty. His philosophy of history can merely establish a certain prepossession in favor of the absoluteness of Christianity, its logical demonstration is out of the question. The conviction of the absoluteness of Christianity both in the sense of the perfect and final and the divinely established religion belongs to the realm of faith.[2]

In the early essays in which Troeltsch expounds his conception of the religio-philosophical method (Die Selbstandigkeit der Religion" and "Metaphysik u. Geschichte", "Christentum u. Religiousgeschichte".) he is convinced that it is an adequate support for the absoluteness of Christianity. The results of his Ritschlian and metaphysical methods are not affected by his new method. It is merely the logical foundation which has changed. Instead of a philosophy of Reality and a Philosophy of Morality we now have a philosophy of history and of mind on which the affirmation of the truth of

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1. E. Troeltsch, "Christentum u. Religiousgeschichte" Schriften II, pp. 350, 352.
2. E. Troeltsch, "Die Selbstandigkeit der Religion, 2Th K, VI, 1896, pp. 215-216.
   Ibid, 2 Th K, V, 1895, pp. 390, 398.

Christianity rests.

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Let us now summarize the results of our study of Troeltsch's attitude towards the question of the absoluteness of Christianity and relate them to the results of our first division.

1. The term absoluteness has both a realistic and an idealistic meaning for Troeltsch. By the absoluteness of Christianity he understands both the revelatory character of Christianity and its character as the final, perfect, and permanent religion. The characteristic feature of Troeltsch's viewpoint is thus the continuation of these two conceptions into one. The immanental view of Idealism and the dualistic view of Ritschlianism both are present.

2. Absoluteness is ascribed to Christianity by Troeltsch because of either of three considerations. a. Christianity is the religion of pure personality. It transcends the realm of nature and therefore implies absoluteness. b. Christianity claims perfect communion with the God who is the Absolute, the center of all Reality. A religion which makes this claim also claims absoluteness. c. Christianity is the religion of redemption through the person of Jesus, i.e., a historic person. As such it is absolute. - These opinions on the part of Troeltsch voice the continuation of inherited motives from Ritschlian and orthodox theology

3. The absoluteness of Christianity becomes problematic because of the implications of the modern method of scientific history. Troeltsch more than any of the representatives studied in our first division looks upon the historical method as a specific tool of the modern mind which means an utter revolution of thought as regards our evaluations and the setting up of standards.

The principles of criticism, analogy and relativity as applied by modern history, which make the affirmation of the absoluteness of a historical phenomenon like Christianity exceedingly difficult, cannot be set aside by taking refuge in the realm of pure faith and inner experience as Ritschlianism does (and as Troeltsch himself had attempted to do according to his theological method).

Neither can Christianity establish itself as the absolute religion by entering into direct connection with some philosophic interpretation of Reality or the moral life.

If difficulty arising from the historical method for the assertion of the absoluteness of Christianity is to be overcome at all it has to be attempted on the basis of history!

Troeltsch thus parts company with the Ritschlians, the Idealistic Ontological Metaphysicians and allies himself with the schools of Hegel and Schleiermacher. The justification for the absolute truth of Christianity must be found in a philosophy of history and of mind, a philosophy of mind which takes its starting point from the cultural achievements of the race.

4. The historical method can be interpreted in an Idealistic as well as in a Relativistic or Positivistic fashion according to Troeltsch. Teleological evolutionism is the result if idealistically interpreted. The history of religion on this basis is not a mere by-play of human civilization, it is an essential feature of the development of mind. It is a teleological process in which the absolute religion takes form. Christianity by being placed in the historical process appears to be the absolute religion.

But just as Troeltsch's conception of the meaning of absoluteness is a joint product of two different ideas, a realistic and an idealistic, so his philosophy of history has two ingredients, namely the immanent Idealism of the Hegelian School and the dualistic, transcendent Culture-Idealism of the school of Class and Eucken.

Christianity is the absolute religion as the consummation of the ripening of the principle of religion in a teleological forward movement. In this line of thought his Hegelianism finds expression.

But Christianity is absolute also as the complete and final manifestation of an independent, self-contained life of the spirit in a phenomenal, empirical world. In theological terms Christianity is absolute because of "inclusive Supernaturalism."

5. The assertion of the absoluteness of Christianity is not to be looked upon as resting ona logical demonstration. All absolute affirmations whether in the field of religion or

or philosophy, ethics and aesthetics contain an element of faith. But Christian faith in affirming the absoluteness of Christianity finds ample support from the "Metaphysics of History".

Troeltsch's view of certainty thus is composed of the Ritschlian and the Hegelian points of view.

6. We have dwelled on those lines of argument pursued by Troeltsch which led him to the affirmation of the absoluteness of Christianity during this period (1891-1900). But we must add that a constant lessening of emphasis on the absolute truth of Christianity is observable even during this time. The full implications of the scientific (versus philosophic) historical method are brought more and more to the fore by Troeltsch, causing his Hegelianism more and more to retire. Since we intend to deal in detail with these issues in our division, we shall not pursue this line any further.

DIVISION III

SYSTEMATIC DISCUSSION OF TROELTSCH'S POSITION AS CONTAINED IN HIS ESSAYS WRITTEN FROM 1900 ON

Troeltsch's chief endeavor, as stated on page 42, was the "conservation and concentration of the religious forces on the basis of a critical transcendentalism."[1] The most important phase of his thought is thus reached with the acepetance of critical Transcendentalism as a basis for his theological reasoning. Our third division will deal with Troeltsch's formulation of the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity and its solution as conditioned by this type of Philosophy.

To accept Critical Transcendentalism as a valid form of philosophy and to go back to Kant is virtually the same. Now Kant's influence on theology has been transmitted through two different channels. One of these is Kant's distinction between theoretical and practical reason with its theological parallel of the distinction between knowledge and faith. In this distinction Ritschlian epistemology has its source. A twofold theory of knowledge is the result. Science follows one type, religion another. It is this kind of Kantianism which was most pronounced in Troeltsch's development as embodied in the writings so far studied. But there is another Kantian

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, Preface p. VII.

idea which has been of equal significance for theology, namely the transcendental idea itself as applied to knowledge with its apriorism. This phase of Kant's thought now becomes predominant for Troeltsch.

In the following pages we shall first of all give a fuller exposition of the meaning of critical transcendentalism in its bearing on the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity. After that we shall study the problem in its relation to Troeltsch's conception of the philosophy of history.[1]

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1. I use the term philosophy of history as including the logic of history as well as the study of historical evaluation and all the problems of the philosophy of history proper, e.g., goal of history, unity of history.

CHAPTER I

PHILOSOPHICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS OF TROELTSCH'S DISCUSSION

a. Rejection of a metaphysics of the religious object

A possible approach to the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity or any form of religion would be from the point of view of the religious object. The idea of God in that case would constitute the standard of evaluation. Speculative Rationalism or any metaphysics of the absolute reflects an effort of this kind. We shall first of all consider Troeltsch's criticism of this way of thinking.

Speculative Rationalism as distinguished from regressive and formal Rationalism starts from the self-sufficiency of rationally conceived concepts. It holds certain concepts to be necessary. By analyzing them it establishes certain consequences which are equally necessary.[1] The chief feature of the philosophy of religion of speculative Rationalism is its identification of religion and our conceptual and metaphysical search for knowledge. A science of religion in that case is simply a branch of metaphysics.[2] The significant feature about religion is not so much its psychological constitution as part of the conscious life of man but rather its belief in a transcendant object. The function of the idea of God is virtually identified with the rational function of interpreting the world. The truth of religion is thus bound

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1. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p.22.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften, II, p.460.

up with the logical validity of the religious object. "Rationalism of all times has attempted to interpret the truth element of religious ideas as concepts of the world - ground rationally established."[1]

Troeltsch distinguishes three historical forms of speculative rationalism. The very first theology of the early church is a form of speculative rationalism. Our modern conceptions of specialized science as well as of religion were lacking. Science was interpreted as a kind of comprehensive view of the world, both religious and ethical. No distinction between science and philosophy was recognized. There were two kinds of knowledge. One was revelation or supernatural knowledge. The other was reason or natural knowledge. Religion makes use of the first; science of the second. Natural knowledge of God and ethics finds its completion in supernatural knowledge.[2]

The second form of speculative rationalism is constituted by the metaphysics of the 17th century . The outstanding interest of men like Descartes, Spinoza, Malebranche and Leibniz was to find an adequate reinterpretation of the traditional idea of God in a changed scientific environment. Leibniz especially spends all his effort in bringing about a combination of a mathematical, mechanical philosophy of nature with an idealistic, teleological view of the world.[3] The Deism

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p.460.
2. E. Troeltsch, W.L., pp. 12-27.
3. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p.478.

of Locke and other English writers is an endeavor of a like nature although based on a new presupposition. A common and universal content of all religions by means of a psychological analysis is here the goal. But this core of religious truth is once more identified with the metaphysical truth content of religion supposed to be in harmony with the interpretation of modern science.

The third form is Hegel's philosophy of religion. It combines a greatmany motives. "It is psychological analysis, epistemological justification, historico-philosophical theory of development and proof for the existence of God all in one" as Troeltsch puts it.[1] The religious object is made identical with the inner movement of reason which is interpreted as cosmic reason.[2]

Against speculative Rationalism and its metaphysical form of philosophy of religion Troeltsch urges the following objections. (1) Modern scepticism has undermined the belief in the omnipotence of conceptual thought. Hume's psychological analysis and Kant's epistemological criticism of the human process of Knowledge make it exceedingly difficult for a modern man to interpret his conceptual products as the means of direct apprehension of a super-empirical object. (2) Furthermore, this kind of philosophy of religion "distorts and prejudices the whole phenomenon of religion."[3] Empirically viewed

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p.488.
2. Ibid, p.481.
3. Ibid, p.260.

the identification of the religious process with knowledge is unwarranted. The logical sufficiency of the religious object cannot be made the test of the truth of religion.

The supernatural form of speculative rationalism makes the same mistake as intellectualism. It is based on a copy theory of knowledge and assumes that religious experience literally reproduces transcendent reality. Our knowledge of the myth and the symbolic character of religious thought has made this position untenable. "Experience is never mere copying but rather productivity in response to certain laws of consciousness."[1] Any philosophy of religion thus starting from the idea of the religious object, i.e., the idea of God, is inadequate as a foundation for the discussion of absoluteness.[2]

b. Troeltsch's formal Rationalism (Critical Transcendentalism)

The philosophical presupposition for Troeltsch's scientific investigation of religion is Kant's formal or critical Rationalism. Idealism is not merely the view that all things are relative in mind or that mind is the ultimate essence of

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1. E. Troeltsch, Rel. Phil. p.184.
2. Although the question does not concern us in this connection, nevertheless, I wish to add that Troeltsch does not deny the question of the religious object a place in the science of religion. As he puts it: religion is never merely the psychic activity of producing and forming religious faith; it is at the same time the affirmation of a real object of its faith, of the idea of God." (II.p.496) But the philosophic treatment of the idea of God is the last link in the chain of tthe science of religion. It can only follow upon the psychological, epistemological and historical investigation of religion. The ideas of validity and of universal reason are the roots of a metaphysics of this kind.

things but it is theconception that mind as we know it is a principle of value and productive of certain contents of life.[1] The mind is to be looked upon as possessing qualifative creative powers which produce special spiritual (geistige) values.[2] The great products of culture like the state, society, law, art, science, are due to certain independent dispositions and energies of the mind which form thoughts and values because of their own inner necessity.[3] Autonomy and spontaneity are the outstanding characteristics of mind.[4] Critical Idealism "rejects every form of metaphysics which attempts to deduce reality with its twofold character from a fundamental reality apprehended by thought. It limits itself to an analysis of subjective human reason, in which reality is contained and from whose fundamental conditions it originates for us."[5] But this analysis, which is not essentially psychological but epistemological, discovers among the jumble of psychical processes the autonomous laws of mind giving validity to certain forms of psychic life. Science, ethics, aesthetics and also religion rest on such laws of validity.[6]

The full meaning of <u>critical Rationalism</u> is more apparent if it is contrasted with <u>Positivism</u> and <u>Pragmatism</u>.

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1. p. 51.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II p.455.
3. Ibid, p.455.
4. Ibid, p.761.
5. Ibid, p.479.
6. Ibid, p. 479.

According to Positivism the mind has no inherent powers or values of its own; it limits mental activity to the mere discovery of relations between phenomena, rejecting any metaphysical interpretation of these relations. The knowledge thus gained is put at the disposal of human ends either individual or generic.[1] For Positivism there is no participation in a spiritual life which follows its own autonomous laws. Religion is an inferior, pre-scientific form of knowledge; it is present in modern society as a survival from the day of the myth but it has no legitimate place where positive knowledge has taken the lead. Pragmatism onthe other hand takes all the contents of mind at their immediate face value. It is the practical function of these contents for the chief issues of life which justifies them. Their validity as embodied in art, science, religion, socila life, does not depend on an autonomous necessary law of a super-empirical mind from which they spring. Over against these forms of philosophy critical Rationalism holds that reason has a certain spontaneous power of its own from which values originate on the basis of necessary laws of mind.[2]

From the general position of critical transcendentalism certain important consequences arise as concerns its epistemology.

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 457.
2. Another feature of critical transcendentalism, namely, the shapp distinction between the intelligible and the phenomenal will be discussed in the second section. At present we are describing those items of the theory which will lead up to the religious a priori in which we have a superhistorical "absolute". The terms mind and reason are used interchangeably in this discussion. From mind or reason consciousness or phychical processes are distinguished as the raw material of experience. What gives validity to the psychical are the laws of reason.

Psychical contents like the ethical, the aesthetic, the logical, are true in the sense of being an expression of an inner necessity of reason. Truth and validity are used interchangeably. What makes anything valid or true is its relation to the intelligible laws of reason. The merely factual or psychological process as such has neither truth nor validity. Truth and validity arise from the laws of the mind. A psychological process of a logical, ethical, or aesthetic kind is valid in so far as it follows the laws of reason. There is therefore no other objectivity except that of validity. Epistemology knows no establishment of proofs of existence as such; it only knows the establishment of the validity and compulsoriness of existing contents of consciousness, and the subordination of all other contents to those cognized as valid.[1] Objectivity is guaranteed in the Kantian manner by making the laws of reason more than subjective, expressing not merely the accidental consciousness of the individual, but rather the inner necessity of consciousness as such. We are thus confronted by a universally valid necessity of reason placed above the individual.[2]

From this it follows that for Troeltsch a scientific investigation of the cultural products of art, science, morality, religion is not simply the application of a certain scientific technique to a group of phenomena. He means by it

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 494.
2. Ibid, p. 479.

a transcendental deduction in the Kantian sense resulting in certain a priori, spontaneous, autonomous forms of reason, which make science, art, morality, and religion first of all valid and establish them in their right. Epistemology is therefore never a quaestio facti but always a quaestio juris. It serves to dispel the illusionistic interpretation of the ethical, the logical, the aesthetic as subjective products in the struggle for existence, regarding them as necessary creations of mind. It is now clear in what sense Troeltsch is able to claim the scientific character of his investigation of religion. It is not scientific in the sense that it substitutes scientific ways of thinking for religious forms of thought as Positivism does, but rather in the sense that it finds in religious phenomena the law of intelligible reason which organizes them into a necessary cultural product. The science of religion thus has the same scientific character as logic, ethics and aesthetics.

After this general sketch of critical transcendentalism as interpreted by Troeltsch, and its chief results for epistemology, we shall now turn to the study of the significance of this form of thought for an interpretation of religion. Following the tradition of immanent Idealism Troeltsch approaches religion as a content of human consciousness. This was true also of the stages of his development traced above. This method now takes on a more concrete form. The abstractions of immanent Idealism reducing psychical facts to principle are less obtrusive. The concreteness of W. James' psychology

is fully appreciated and recommended as the kind of psychology which serves best as an entrance-hall to an epistemological investigation of religion. Nevertheless, the mere psychological study of the concrete, historical life of religion (although basic for a scientific comprehension of religion) leaves us merely with the helter-skelter facts of religious phenomena. To be sure we can bring some measure of system into this mass by means of the causal principle. But that would mean the complete mechanizing of religious phenomena. The chief question is, can we supplement the merely factual aspect of psychic religious life with the valid and the normative. This is simply a special application of the fundamental question of criticism or critical transcendentalism, which holds that reason as such is productive of certain normative functions. It breaks in upon the merely psychical with its spontaneous and autonomous norms. Now just as the logical, ethical, or aesthetical consciousness is normative, so in the same way the religious consciousness is the necessary function of an inherent law of reason which is normative. "Religion is also a law of production (Gestaltung) which issues from the very nature of consciousness."[1] In other words just as criticism assumes an a priori of the logical, aesthetic and ethical consciousness, it must also assume a religious a priori.

As to the content of the religious a priori, Troeltsch does not wholy agree with the views of Eucken, Class and

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1. E. Troeltsch, Rel. Phil. p. 154.

Windelband who, starting from the opposition between the phenomenal psychic nature of man and his unitary norm-consciousness or mind, look upon religion as the apprehension of the norm-consciousness as transcendent reality. Troeltsch adds to the norm-consciousness the consciousness that all reality is dependent on an absolute.[1] The religious a priori is best understood in connection with the phenomenon of mysticism.[2] We may then say it is the immediate realization of the immanence of human consciousness in the divine consciousness.[3] The special category of form of the religious consciousness is thus the moreeor less obscure presence of the divine in the soul, the feeling of the presence and reality regarding something which is superhuman or infinite.[4] In the religious apriori we have the immediate relating of the whole of existence and chiefly of all our values to an absolute substance as source and standard.

Troeltsch's conception of the apriori thus marks an extension of the Kantian use of it. The Kantian apriori has the function of producing synthetic unity with the view to the comprehension of objects or the constituting of experience. For Troeltsch it does not serve the purpose of scientific comprehension. It serves the building up of a unified per-

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1. E.Troeltsch, Rel. Phil. p.155.
2. Troeltsch has thus traveled a long way from Kant's apriori ideas of reason. Nevertheless the apriori is nonphenomenal and intelligible, just as Kant's idea.
3. E. Troeltsch, Rel. Phil. p. 155.
4. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p. 34.

sonality which has its cource in a rational nucleus of the necessary.[1,2] The apriori thus is practical, it is an expression of the independence of reason and stands for the universal and necessary, by which reason is distinguished from the psychologically relative.[3]

Our chief interest in discussing Troeltsch's conception of the religious a priori at this point is the fact that in it he feels that he has the universal truth of religion. The apriori constitutes the truth of religion as such. The cognitive value or truth of religion is assured by its reduction to a productive law of consciousness.[4] That religion is part of the rational organization of our consciousness is our only epistemological assurance of its truth. This apriori law of consciousness is the final ground for the scientific establishment of the truth of religion.[5] Let us observe that Troeltsch has a common universal truth of religion to be distinguished from the particular truth of concrete historical forms of religion. He has no other way of discovering this common element except by delving into the psychological facts of religious phenomena; but what makes these facts valid, or true, is not their occurrence as facts and their function in life, but their connection with a necessary element in man's

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, pp. 757 ff.
2. Troeltsch claims that this use of the apriori is in full accord with Kant's own conception of the apriori. This seems doubtful. Kant uses the apriori even in ethics and aesthetics in order to get valid judgments.
3. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p.757.
4. E. Troeltsch, Rel. Phil. p.154.
5. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p. 27.

rational economy. Moreover we are here face to face with an absolute. By consciousness Troeltsch always means consciousness as such, universal consciousness, with its necessary laws. Thus Epistemologically religion rests on an absolute.

Troeltsch's absolute, or religious apriori is not merely an epistemological absolute. He attributes a metaphysical significance to it. Kant refrained from setting forth the metaphysical presuppositions of his aprioris. Fichte, Schleiermaker, Eucken, Siebeck have attempted to fill in this gap; and rightly so, according to Troeltsch.[1] The aprioris are to be interpreted as due to "a rational nucleus which lies back of the psychic processes and their causal interconnections".[2] It is only in this manner that the unity of things can be established. "The harmony between the apriori, rational, universal and the factual, irrational, singular is the secret of reality and the fundamental problem of all knowledge. The philosophy of religion divines in this secret the hidden unity of cosmic reason in which the universal, necessary, rational, and the factual, individual, given constitute an incomprehensible unity."[3] Troeltsch's epistemological findings thus lead up to a philosophy of the absolute.[4]

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, pp. 758-759.
2. Ibid, p. 758.
3. E.Troeltsch, Psych u. Erk, p. 49.
4. If Troeltsch were a strict Kantian his apriori could have been merely a law of reason. This law of reason would have been the absolute. But Troeltsch is too much influenced by mysticism and especially by Schleiermacher to be satisfied with a mere transcendental law. The objectivity which transcendentalism

In spite of all these indications that the religious apriori constitutes an absolute Troeltsch does not ascribe the same rigidity to it which we find in Kant's rational system of aprioris. In his "Psychologie und Erkenntnis theorie" several modifications of the Kantian viewpoint are suggested. The Kantian idea of a complete system of apriori forms needs reinterpretation he holds. "There will never be a complete system of apriori concepts. The system will always be a matter of growth."[1] The recognition of the rational, the valid, the apriori, is a decision of the will.[2] It is in the struggle between the rational and the irrational that the apriori emerges. The apriori thus is not the result of a purely intellectual apprehension. Applied to the philosophy of religion this mean; "that the undertaking to ascertain the truth of religion from the psychological and historical reality of religion is always a battle with what is merely factual and erroneous." The establishment of the truth of religion is always an act and a decision, which although obeying objective

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offers does not quite square with the objectivity of the religious consciousness in its immediacy. Scientifically he would hold the former suffices, it makes religion a necessary rational product and frees it from the stain of illusion. But then again his religion rebels against a mere apriori law and he reintroduces the idea of an object in the traditional sense. He discovers the spectre of value - theology which loses the necessity of the object, to which the values attach and which approaches the precipice of wish - and illusion theology. (Psych. u. Erk. p. 28.)

1. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p. 31.
2. Ibid, p. 30.

and rational necessity, first of all creates the truth ina struggle against error and the merely factual."[1] All this means a certain relativizing of the religious apriori. Its character of necessity is somewhat softened because it is made a matter of struggle and of decision. The psychological and historical tendencies are too strong for Troeltsch to maintain a purely epistemological transcendentalism in the field of religion. He thereby weakens his scientific position in the transcendental sense of the term but does greater justice to his historical interpretation of things. Nevertheless in spite of this modification of the Kantian position it is apparent that Troeltsch's effort is exerted towards the finding of the truth of religion. And although he psychologises and historises his apriori to such an extent that the Kantian aprioris would hardly accept it, he fully means to give it the character of necessity and universality, which after all decides the matter.[2]

The relation between Troeltsch's exposition of the religious apriori on the basis of critical transcendentalism and his conception of an inherited absolute in his essay on the "Selbstandigkeit der Religion" is a very close one.[3] Both make for an absolute factor in all religion. The conception of the objectivity of this absolute, however, has changed

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1. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p.31.
2. The significance of the apriori for determining a normative type of religion will be discussed under 3.
3. Cf. p.55.

somewhat. The objectivity of the religious apriori means simply the transcendental necessity of religion as a product of reason.[1] We may also say that Troeltsch's intuition was the result of a psychological analysis of religion, while his religious apriori is the result of an epistemological investigation. The former made for the underivability and independence of religion, the latter makes for its truth.

Before taking up the historical question involved in the problem of absoluteness we may well ask whether Troeltsch is more concerned with the psychological and epistemological problem of religion or with the historico-philosophical problem. In his essay on the "Psychologie und Erkenntuisbbeorie in der Religionswissenschaft" he calls the psychological and epistemological problem the inner core of a scientific study of religion. To the historical problem he assigns the second place.[2] This does not merely mean that methodically it must come second, but it no doubt is intended to indicate relative importance or value. It is significant that although Troeltsch attempts a reconciliation of thephilosophical factor with the historical in theology, the former is always wholeheartedly accepted while the second is looked upon with a certain amount of suspicion as tending towards mere relativism and historism, and as needing support by philosophical considerations.[3] His

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1. It is the relation of the apriori and the irrational which leads to the question of metaphysical unity, not the apriori itself.
2. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p. 28.
3. " " , Schriften II, p. 754.

critical transcendentalism is therefore not to be underrated even though his historical investigations may seem to bulk larger. No matter how historical Troeltsch may turn out to be the absoluteness of his transencentalism remains.

In summing up our study of Troeltsch's philosophical presupposition we have the following propositions.

(1) Transcendental Rationalism enables us to construe an apriori law of the religious life which has its source in reason. This apriori necessity constitutes the truth of religion. In advance of any truth of the concrete historical religions we have a universal truth of religion.

(2) There is no unique epistemology of the Christian religion or of religion in general. The epistemology used for other cultural products like art, morality, is also used for religion. The theory of knowledge Troeltsch has in mind however is not identical with the concrete scientific technique used by the sciences. It is transcendental in its character proving the truth or validity of a cultural phenomenon by tracing it to a necessary, spontaneous, and autonomous law of reason functioning in it.

CHAPTER II

TROELTSCH'S CONCEPTION OF HISTORY AND THE QUESTION OF ABSOLUTENESS

The transition from the epistemological apriori of religion to the historical forms of religion is accomplished by the idea of the actualization of the religious apriori. The mere apriori is not to be looked upon as religion. It is the capacity for religion but not religion itself. To have religion is the law of normal consciousness and as such finds expression in the feeling of immanent necessity and of duty. Through it consciousness receives its integration and relation to an objective world-reason. Nevertheless the apriori of religion as the mere capacity for religion is nothing but an abstraction. In order to constitute religion it must be filled with a psychic content.[1] The religious apriori is religion in its latent form but to find actual religion we must study it as embodied in historical and psychic forms. There is no substitute for the historical phenomena of religion. If the apriori were a content instead of a mere form the question of the absoluteness of a particular historical religious apriori would constitute the norm and any religion embodying it fully would be the absolute religion. The question of the truth of religion would also settle the question of the absoluteness of a definite kind of religion. Since, however, religion is

1. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p.44.

only found in concrete form the further question arises as to the worth of the historical religions. From a consideration of the general truth of religion we must turn towards the truth of the specific historical religions. The historical problem connected with religion is how to make one of the many religions normative, for the historian does his work not merely for the sake of accumulating knowledge of things of the past, but because of the values revealed in history.[1] But in order to deal with history the question of method comes to the fore.

1. Troeltsch's conception of the historical method

History is viewed by Troeltsch as a method[2] by which norms or values are established. "History is the foundation of all our thinking concerning values and norms, a means by which the race learns to know itself, its own nature, its origin, and its hopes." "It is a principle of viewing all things human."[3] As a method of thought it is one of the outstanding characteristics of the modern world. Indeed it constitutes a special type of culture, (Kulturtypus) as over against the

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 32.
2. History is used here in the sense of the science of history and is equivalent to the German "Historie". The object of the science, the historical process itself is called "Geschichte". We shall use the temrs "history" and "historical process".
3. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. pp.3-4.

world-culture (Weltkultur)[1] of antiquity and the culture of the Catholic Chruch. Modern historical thought has its sources in the following movements: the critical investigation of political and social institutions at the time of the Enlightenment, the fight against the legends of the Catholic Church starting with the Reformation, the renewal of ecclesiastical and classical philology, and the evolutionary conceptions of German Idealism.[2] But historical thinking is not merely the outcome of certain modern historical movements it has a transcendental foundation. Let us attempt to state what it consists in.

a. Troeltsch follows Rickert in his general conceptions of the logic and philosophy of history. In his "Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung, Eine logische Einleitung in die historischen Wissenschaffen" Rickert produces an epistemological deduction of history, which Troeltsch endorses.[3] History is brought into relation with the idea of value on the basis of epistemological considerations. The epistemological self is the source of certain inner necessities of consciousness. It urges one to seek truth, in otherwords it posits something that ought to be. Men are conscious of the imperative urge to transform all experience as it comes to

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1. Troeltsch uses the term "Welt" here in the sense of "nature". Antiquity did not know the struggle between nature and personality, the flesh and the spirit which is characteristic of the Christian "Kulturtypus".
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.1.
3. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 719.

to them into a realm of truth.[1] In subjecting all reality to the inner demands of the epistemological consciousness two forms of necessity arise,[2] laws and values. These constitute the universally valid. History is the search after normative values arising from this inner urge of the epistemological self. An inner essential necessity of thought which is the compulsion of consciousness to form ideals of value is the source of all historical thinking. And this constitutes its scientific character.[3] History thus has its transcendental foundation, in the consciousness of what ought to be the norm consciousness.

Two features of this normative consciousness are important for our discussion. In the first place it is purely formal. It consists solely in the impulse to form an ideal. The contents must come from experience. Only the historical process itself in its empirical character can fill in the schema provided by the consciousness of truth. But in the second place the consciousness of normative values is the consciousness that an absolute value or an absolute norm exists. The apriori of all knowledge is a final end which ought to be.[4]

b. The universally valid as we have said appears in two forms, as laws and as values. If the idea of law is made the organizing principle of science we have the nature-sciences,

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, pp.706-708.
2. Ibid, pp. 706-7.
3. Ibid, p. 701.
4. Ibid, p.700.

if on the other hand the idea of value is used history is the result. We have science in either case for both forms of thought rest on fun damental necessities of the epistemological consciousness. Now a law is always a universal and the nature-sciences employing it have no interest in particular processes as particulars. The process is not studied as here and now, as singular in its occurrence and as of a particular quality but rather as a mere instance of a universal. Values on the other hand are of interest in their peculiar qualities, as occurring at a certain time.[1] Science and history are thus diametrically opposed. Universality, timelessness, absence of uniqueness characterizes the former, particularity, singularity the latter.[2] History deals with individual singular complexes of value as they take form in certain centers of action, the latter including manking, civilized mankind, nations, classes, societies, individual persons.[3] But history is not a mere enumeration of value-complexes, it studies these values or meanings as they arise and as giving significance to particular facts, In their historical connections and development.[4]

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1. The connection between value and individuality is left undiscussed. In his "Historismus" Troeltsch connects the reality and indissolubility of individuality with the intuitive perception of one's own self. The historian and the naive artist exercise this intuition of individuality in the highest degree. There is no need for an elaborate metaphysical or epistemological investigation of "individuality". We possess empirical certainty of it which is the basis of all metaphysics and epistemology. I, p.37. But cf. p. 84, as regards the sources of historical individualization.
2. Windelband calls the nature sciences "nomothetic"sciences and the historical sciences "idiographic" sciences.
3. E.Troltsch, Schriften II, p. 692.
4. Ibid. p.692.

Before taking up these historical relations we must point out Troeltsch's interpretation of the source of individuality. For Rickert it is a mere category of the epistemological subject. Troeltsch seems to accept all that, but adds to it a metaphysical (or objective) interpretation. The same correction is made by him in connection with the historical relations as we shall see a little later. Individuality and singularity have two sources according to a statement in the "Absolutheit des Christentums" - an "inner movement of life which is underivable at the time" and "the correlative interrelationship of the historical process, because of which the special conditions of the forces at work make every product appear as a particularly modified revelation of life, especially of the mental life, possible only at this point."[1] It is the second situation which we are accustomed to designate the relativity of history. Now Troeltsch adds to the given conditions making for an individual singular historical phenomenon at a certain point in the historical process a transcendent depth of history constituting an underivable.[2] This transcendent depth is of an ethical quality, it is the absolute norm-consciousness. It makes every historical product a particular decision and therefore is a source of the special historical characteristic of individuality.[3,4]

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 25.
2. Ibid, p. 55.
3. We shall meet with this same idea of the "transcendent depth of history" in another connection, in which it is used for the very opposite purpose of showing that the same norm-consciousness is back of all historical occurrences and that consequently a great amount of

c. There is a conception of the historical process which would make the derivation of normative values from history impossible. If the whole of history could be put into a network of mechanical causation we could still speak of values arising in this network but a normative interpretation would become impossible. It is therefore all important for Troeltsch with his view of history as the source of normative values to find an interpretation of the causal principle different from the one it receives by the nature-sciences.

Following Rickert, Troeltsch distinguishes between the

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universal validity of historical individuations results. The only possible objection to our interpretation would consist in refusing to identify the phrases "unableitbare innere Bewegung des Lebens" and "transzendente Tiefe der Geschichte". Now the "innermovement of life" according to Troeltsch's view is not a one plane affair as is clear from his metaphysical interpretation of the relation of the epistemological and psychological subject. The inner movement of life is therefore not merely underivable because of the complexity of the inner and outer conditions which make up an historical situation. What makes it underivable is the transcendent factor which does not lie in the phenomenal plane.

4. Schleiermacher as we saw also conceived of history as a process of individuation. The difference between Schleiermacher and Troeltsch is that the "absolute" which is involved is an ethical norm-consciousness in the latter's case and a metaphysical indifference point with the former. For Schleiermacher the "Absolute" means the abandonment of all distinctions and opositions, as for instance those of subject and object, nature and mind, self and not-self.

mechanistic conception of causality with its uniformity of cause and effect (Kausalgleichung) and the conception of individual causality (Individualkausalitat) which permits the emergence of new forces in the historical process. But he is not satisfied with a purely methodological interpretation of these principles. Their difference is due to the difference of the objects involved. The historical object is different from the physical object since it is mental. The human mind cannot be studied by means of a method developed in connection with physical objects. Psychology is not a nature-science; it is a branch of philosophy and must be linked with Transcendentalism.[1] Psychology has to make a distinction between the lower strata of psychic life - the perceptions and the instincts - and the higher mental (spiritual) contents of life. The latter are necessary principles in themselves opposing the natural motivations arising from the perception and instinct.[2] Universal causal connection according to law is possible only between the natural conditions of existence and the perceptual and instinctive elements of psychic life; but the spiritual contents of life can neither be looked upon as producing the entire network of psychic forces nor as the result of the causal interactions of the fundamental psychic elements.[3] We can only speak of the more or less favorable "constellations of the natural interplay of psychic forces"

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 720.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 38.
3. Ibid, p. 38.

for the emergence of the higher spiritual contents of life.[1]

Man's nature thus is fundamentally dualistic,[2,3] and cannot be reduced to a purely mechanical interpretation employing solely the principle of the uniformity of cause and effect.[4] Kant's distinction between the phenomenal and intelligible self meets Troeltsch's full approval. As far as their relationship is concerned however, he insists on a thorough modification of the Kantian viewpoint.[5] First of all Kant's identification of the phenomenal with what is perceived in time-relations is rejected. "Not all that has the time character belongs to the phenomenal; the autonomous

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d.Chr. p. 38.
2. "Das seelische Lebenist überkaupt von Hause aus nicht eine in blosser kausaler Aufeinanderfolge gleichartiger akte hergestellte Reihe von Geschehnissen, sondern ein geheimnisreiches Doppelwesen, in dem die schwierigen Begriffe der Freibeit u. der Persönlichkeit jedenfalls insoferne eine grundlegende Bedeutung haben, als die Motivierung aus den höheren Geistesinhalten niemals die einfache Fortsetzung der begonnenen natürlichen Motivierung is als der Hevorgang solcher Inhalte nie durch blosse Summierungen bisheriger Wirkungen, sondern durch unableitbare, aus tieferem Grunde emporsteigende Erschliessungen stattfindet."
3. Troeltsch's view is the very opposite of Herder's as expressed in his "Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit", e.g., "Die ganze Menshheitsgeschichte ist eine reine Naturgeschichte menschlicher Krafte, Handlungen u. Triebe nach Ort u. Zeit". (XIII, VII)
4. Troeltsch not only rejects the application of the mechanistic causal principle to mental life but also Wundt's conceptions of a special kind of causal principle demanded by the character of psychic life. Wundt, Physiol. Psychologie, 6th ed. vol III, p.755. Princip der schöpferischen Resultanten.
5. E. Troeltsch, Psych u. Erk. p. 39.

rational acts which thrust themselves into the time process of consciousness have their own intelligible time character.[1] In the second place the concept of causality must be modified. There is not merely an immanent phenomenal causal nexus, but also an orderly interaction between phenomenal and intelligible, psychological and rational consciousness. This relationship which is called "orderly interaction" is however different from causal compulsion.[2,3] Because of his transcendental Psychology Troeltsch denies the validity of the causal principle as a means of historical interpretation. "I deny the feasi-

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1. In his "Historismus" Troeltsch accepts the modern distinction between the scientific conception of time in which the space element predominates and the historical conception of time resting on the fact of memory. The relation of his intelligible time to this idea of continuous or historical time is not cleared up. (I. p.57)
2. "It must be possible that personality can be created and developed in the phenomenal self through a creative act of the intelligible self latent in it as the realization of autonomous reason, whereby the intelligible breaks forth from the phenomenal, the rational from the psychological, works upon it in tima and shapes it." "Psych. u. Erk." p. 40.
3. This conception of the interaction of thephenomenal and the intelligible makes it possible for Troeltsch to discover trades of "absolute" values in the phenomenal or in history. Kant struggled all his life with the difficulty of relating his purely intelligible ethical value to the ethical historical process. He attempts to conceive of history as the realization of morality. Historical existence receives its value from the ethical content contained in it. The historical process must do something as far as this moral postulate is concerned. Kant's ethical philsophy however, excludes the possibility of a connection between the purely intelligible character of morality and the historical process. Inconsistently he conceives of history as "producing in man the capacity, to act morally and with freedom". Arvid Grotenfelt, Gerschichtliche Wertmasstäbe. 1905. pp. 66, 69.

bility of causal interpretation in the sense of universal necessity according to law as regards the historical object and the entire complex of psychic life. Not merely because a purely causal and mechanical interpretation and an evaluating interpretation cannot be placed alongside of each other as two parallels which have no contact, but because I have not been able to convince myself of the actual application of the causal interpretation to the "ideas" (Ideen) and normative values as well as to the sensations and instincts. I hold that the entire higher mental life related to a supersensible reality needs an ontological foundation with independent principles of its own."[1] The historical object thus is to be approached fromthe point of view of an independent spiritual life possessing necessary normative values and not from the point of view of a causal network in which it is embedded.

It would, however, be a mistaken idea to hold that this rejection of the causal interpretation of the historical object on the part of Troeltsch involves the complete isolation of values from the social, political, intellectual conditions under which they emerge. The historical meaning-complex is always a combination of a pehenomenal situation and the supersensible norm-consciousness. Every situation of a truly historical character involves in addition to the given psychic condition of the centers of action and the environmental con-

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. XV.

ditions an intelligible factor which makes the outcome something other than the accumulated result of those conditions. The geographical, anthropological, economic and social conditions are not to be left out in an historical interpretation according to Troeltsch, but they do not constitute the whole of it. "There are contents and ideals of life forming themselves in the depths of souls which are not the mere products, but the creative regulators of historical life."[1]

From Troeltsch's attitude towards the causal principle his conception of supernaturalism becomes clear. A full discussion of this point will be postponed till we shall take up his criticism of theological supernaturalism. Suffice it to say that Troeltsch's historical universe is not a one plane universe. We have an interaction of two different realms - an intelligible realm and a phenomenal realm. Although the world of physical bodies is conceived as being interpretable by the idea of mechanical causality as expressed in the law of the conservation of energy, the historical world is one in which new events arise.[2] Now the new for Troeltsch is not the product of immanent forces of the phenomenal realm, it arises out of the transcendent depth of history or the intelligible realm. In that sense his view of history makes room for the supernatural or the miraculous. The historical and the miraculous are identical.

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 56.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, pp. 775-776.

In addition to the causal principle there are a number of other relational historical categories which Troeltsch holds do not receive sufficient attention in Rickert's logic of history. "The individual complexes of value are not without relations, merely contradictory products. Historical values emerge in an historical connection, which shows a plurality of analogous forms, and which presents a developmental process if successively viewed, making for the continuation and the use of former solutions."[1] These relations necessitate the retention of the terms "idea", "tendency", "analogy", "type", as historical categories. The term "idea" has played a great role in the science of history as a principle of arrangement and combination of facts. Rickert's conception of the historical individual is not a full substitute for it. The continuity of the historical individual is constituted by the unfolding of the germ-like meanings or meaning given with it. It is only as the consequences of such a meaning work themselves out that we can speak of the development of such an individual.[2] The latter takes place either through the stimulation of external conditions or by way of the inner necessity of the meaning itself.[3] The unfolding of the full consequences

1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 711.
2. Ibid, p. 722.
3. Two misinterpretations of the idea have to be guarded against. Troeltsch does not intend to say that the historical process is directed throughout by conscious ideas of ends. In the second place the ideas are not hypostatized forces, which make up the reality of the historical process along side of the particular deeds and events. Cp. next point: the metaphysical meaning of the categories of relation.

of an idea cannot be construed as a strictly logical law. Nevertheless every historical development process has a certain tendency to develop in a definite direction. The term tendency thus has a rightfulplace in history.[1] There are also analogies in the development of the tendencies of "ideas". Cultural contents of like qualities have identical tendencies of development. Closely connected with the terms "analogies" and "tendencies" is the term "type",which "combines that which is characteristic of the more clearly defined connections of cultural complexes as regards their process of development as well as their results".[2] The type is not to be confused with the idea of a general average or that of an ideal. The terms referred to presuppose the unity and the qualitative likeness of the historical.[3] The emergence of the historical occurrings at different points is uniform in its character. Historical processes consequently show connections because of the same meanings expressed in them. Analogous tendencies making for their final confluence and superindividual totalities of mind constituting types are the result. History is not composed exclusively of unique and indivisible totalities of value it has also need of the general in the form of analogies, tendencies and types. Troeltsch thus attempts a combination of Rickert's and Hegel's logic of history. The ultimate unit of history he conceives of as a value-complex or a meaning-total-

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 722.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II,p. 723.
3. Ibid, p. 723.

ity accepting Rickert's point of view but the relationships of history are of a Hegelian character.[1]

But it is not only in connection with the factor of universality as such that a difference is seen between Rickert's and Troeltsch's view of historical method. The significance of relations undergoes a marked change in Troeltsch's exposition. For Rickert all relations whether used in the nature sciences or in history have transcendental reality. They are contrivances of the epistemological subject for the ordering and controlling of the strictly immanent contents of experience. The scientific interpretation of experience does not furnish us with data of a truer reality than experience itself. All relations are therefore purely instrumental. Troeltsch accepts this view as regards the world of bodies, or nature. But he replaces the transcendental significance of the categories of history by the metaphysical meaning.[2] The historical object is not merely a content of consciousness, it has transcendent reality. "Psycholo-physical beings are for themselves and act as independent forces in becoming conscious to others." They are metaphysically real. The relationships of history take on a like meaning, they have metaphysical significance.[3] The terms discussed above are more than merely regulative categories they express "a principle of spiritual life which transcends and dominates individuals even though it appears

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1. Cf. p. .
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 725.
3. Ibid, p. 725.

exclusively in individuals."[1] "There is an inner totality of spiritual values which breaks forth from the natural life of the soul, which cannot be construed apriori but which is nevertheless discernible a posteriori from the interconnection of historical life."[2,3]

Our survey of the main conceptions of formal-rational Empiricism as applied to history is now complete, but the chief problem arising from history, namely how to establish valid norms or normative values on an historical basis is yet to be discussed. This problem is a strictly philosophical one.[4,5] Our epistemological discussion of history has lead up to the idea of a norm-consciousness which by its inherent compulsion drives on to the search for normative values, but it has not given us any light as to the connection between historical values as they emerge and a standard of values. To solve this problem Troeeltsch attempts a union of Relativism and Absolutism.[6] Relativity is sometimes interpreted as involving the indefinite origination and dissolution of particular historical phenomena

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 725.
2. Ibid, p. 225.
3. Troeltsch's conception of history thus remains ideological in spite of the strong influence of Rickert's critical position. The true meaning of history lies for Troeltsch in the superindividual "Geistesleben". One is reminded of Hegel's position for whom the individual is merely the bearer and embodiment of the "Idea". (Hegel, Enzyklopaedie 375). Troeltsch identifies his own position with that of Eucken.
4. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 701.
5. Although Troeltsch looks upon his epistemological views as resting on the methods of empirical history it is easily seen that he drifts constantly across the border of methodological investigation into the field of metaphysical ideas. The transcendentalism of Rickert is transformed into an objective Idealism at several points,

through the operation of certain general laws. Troeltsch rejects this idea because of his conception of the inapplicability of the conception of mechanical causality to history.[1] But there is a sense in which the historical is identical with the relative. "All historical phenomena are of a particular, individual character." Now the question of relativity does not concernthe relations under which these individual phenomena arise, but rather the possibility of discovering among these individuations of history values which have common tendencies, which lend themselves to be compared and which lead to a final decision.[2] Relativity is not a question of causal relatedness but of truth and validity. "The ideals of life as regulators of historical life do not found their claims of validity on the causal necessity of their origin but on their truth."[3] An extreme type of Relativism might hold that history produces such a variety of meanings or values that it is impossible to establish valid norms. Against this supposition however the following objections can be made. History cannot avail itself of possible prehistoric periods nor of an endlessly extended future; it only deals with the sphere of culture known to us. Its decisions as to normative values can be based only on the outstanding main types of spiritual life.[4] Moreover

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e.g., the historical idea of individuality is the result of bbjective differences and the relationships of history are of a metaphysical quality.

5. (Footnote, p.105) E.Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr.p.58.
1. Cf. p. 88 ff.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 57.
3. E. Troeltsch Abs. d. Chr., p. 56.
4. Ibid, p. 60.

an historical survey will bring to light a very small number of values and of spiritual aims.[1] The idea of endless progress is a mere prejudice and not warranted by facts. On the contrary the great important achievements of our scientific, political, aesthetic, social and religious life seem permanent, although they will take on ever new individual forms just as they are the outcome of particular constellations.[2] The values are all more or less given, it is only a question now whether the highest are going to be victorious. Finally historical thinking does not exclude the possibility of comparing the great values and contents of the spiritual life with each other and of judging them according to a standard of value. In other words the variety of values does not exclude the idea of a common goal.[3]

In addition to these empirical considerations making for the attainment of normative values in spite of the relativity of history Troeltsch presents us with a number of more or less philosophical conceptions for the same purpose. History's chief method for the discovery of the meaning-complexes of the past is introjection. Now this hypothetical putting oneself in the place of another individual is due to the fact that man is a microcosm. If it were not for certain analogies we could never sympathize with the values of former ages.

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d.Chr. p. 60.
2. Ibid, p. 63.
3. Ibid, p. 64.

All this points towards a common element in human nature which induces us to weigh the various values and to search for the normative.[1] In all historical phenomena an ideal element must find expression which we ourselves are conscious of.[2]

Again history is the union of experience and the normative. The same norm-consciousness or idea of an absolute norm has been active throughout the historical process. The actually realized values are all solutions of our own problem of how to make values normative. All relative solutions thus contain an absolute element.[3] The absolute thus has found embodiment before and we don't have to start completely de novo.

But a still more metaphysical argument awaits us. As we have seen Troeltsch looks upon the relationships of history as objective.[4] Thereby he achieves a real (or transcendent) continuity of history. Now if we follow this continuity for the sake of forming a scale of cultural values we may be sure of dealing with an objective connection and not a mere subjective arrangement for the sake of better orientation.[5] Our own judgment which is no doubt an individual act is "a member of a connection driven forward by an inner impulse."[6,7]

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr.p. 56.
2. Ibid, p. 64.
3. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 708.
4. cf. p.
5. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 726. & p.711.
6. Ibid, p. 726.
7. Troeltsch refers in this connection to the philosophy of Henri Bergson. He holds that the latter's viewpoint is in harmony with his own. Bergson also starts from an empirical, immanent Realism, rejects the mechanistic determinism of Psychology, and recognizes in the "Elan

The most important idea however by means of which Troeltsch endeavors to overcome the relativity of historical values is that of a common goal which is present in all evaluations. This common goal is derived from the comparableness of historical values. The fact that values can be compared indicates a common element inherent in all of them; it presupposes a universally valid.[1] Now the latter is not a universal concept nor alaw of historical life, but a goal, an ideal. It is important to observe in this connection that Troeltsch hypostatises the formal quality of universal validity which evaluations struggle to attain, making of it a substantial

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vital" (Auftrieb des Lebens, the uprush of life) the bursting forth of the metaphysical depths of life into the realm of spatial and temporal phenomenality. What is lacking in Bergson is the apriori of an absolute system of values. Consequently he is unable to achieve a firm inner connection of historical life. The difference between Troeltsch and Bergson, however, is much more profound than this. They approach the problem of life from two diametrically opposed angles. Troeltsch approaches history from the point of view of value. Bergson remains completely within the realm of the biological which he turns into metaphysics. Although Troeltsch holds that he can use the idea of an uprush of life, it simply does not fit in with his conception of value. If both were less metaphorical one might be able to extract more than mere poetry from their conceptions of a "Geistesleben" or an "elan vital". There can however hardly be any doubt as to who does more justice to the historical process. Human life if morality is not to be placed in the sky as a mere fata morgana is certainly a question of meaning and value and not of a mere uprush of life or Elan vital.

1. The merely formal demand for the universally valid is constantly transformed by Troeltsch into an absolute value. But it is a very different thing to maintain that our evaluations based on comparison struggle after universal validity and to say that they involve an absolute value.

absolute value present in the process of historical evaluations. When Troeltsch places the idea of a goal over against the idea of a universal concept or a law, the terms have to be taken as implying a subs tantial essence which different evaluations aim to express. But the mere fact that values can be compared surely does not involve a common goal in that sense, but merely a goal in the sense of following the same epistemological standard of reaching a normative, or a universally valid at all. The differende in the interpretation of the final goal will be more evident if we quote two statements. Stating Rickert's view, which is also his own, we find this sentence. "As an apriori of the epistemological subject the final goal (end) merely means the necessity of referring contents to a universally valid, to waht ought to be."[1] The second quotation is taken from the Absolutheit des Christentums. "The converging directions of the fundamental tendencies (which come to light by comparing historical values) point towards a universally normative goal floating before the whole, whose nature is recognizable in spite of all the differences of individual forms, which permits us because of its everywhere known "idea" to judge of its more or less complete realization, and which as whole or fully realized transcends the historical process and can be apprehended only as conditioned by time and in individual form."[2] In the one case Troeltsch's goal is modelled after the demands of his formal Rationalism or Transcendentalism; in the other

1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 708.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 68.

it is part and parcel of his objective Idealism. "The normative or the universally valid thus turns out to be also the idea of a general and absolute."[1] Now the common goal of all evaluations transcends the historical process. It does not demand absolute realization. Nevertheless the principle of its fundamental tendency appears in a final manifestation.[2] Logically however, this final manifestation cannot be located at any particular point.[3] The goal is finally identified with the spiritual core of all reality and thus consciously receives a metaphysical interpretation.[4] "It is a higher spiritual reality which itself is the producing force of the idea of an aim, of our disquiet and desire which is ever pressing forward, and of the opposition towards the merely natural world."[5]

We must now return to the question of a standard applicable in dealing with the actual historical values and evaluations. They imply a common goal according to Troeltsch, but that does not give us any light as to how we are going to make historical values normative. Our previous discussion has shown how Troeltsch attempts to retain a certain kind of absolutism along with the relativity of historical products. In dealing with the question of a standard of values the second phase of the matter is given due emphasis. A new ambiguity confronts us in this connection. "The standard can

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1. E.Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 70.
2. Ibid, p.70.
3. The idea of evolution as conceived by Troeltsch which could find a place at this point will be taken up in connection with his criticism of Hegelianism.
4. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.71.
5. Ibid, p. 71.

produce itself only in the free struggle of ideas. By living over the great human battles, by hypothetically putting oneself in the place of the struggling movements the standard is practically and personally won ever anew and experienced."[1] The standard is a systhesis of the historical achievements of the past and the living present.[2] The content of the values is derived from history. It is only by an act that the standare can be produced.[3] This synthesis is also an historical occurrence and shares the full relativity of such occurrences. The fact that the selection of a certain value as a normative is done on the basis of the most comprehensive historical comparison constitutes its scientific character. On the other hand it is always personal, individual, conditioned.[4] The final decision rests on personal, subjective, inner conviction.[5] In fact the forming of a standard is itself a moral act and thus creative, and involves all the risk of historical conditionedness.

So far Troeltsch's meaning is clear and convincing. The common goal in all processes of evaluation as we have seen has a double meaning. At one time it is the formal idea of universal validity, at another it suddenly takes on the meaning of a metaphysical spiritual life. This ambiguous view confuses the issue once more at this point. On the one hand the establishment of a standard is a matter of risk, of adventure, on

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d.Chr. p. 65.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 709.
3. Ibid, p. 712.
4. Ibid, p. 712.
5. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 67.

the other it is a comparing of the actual values achieved in history with the transcendent goal of history or the spiritual life. The transcendent goal of history as he tells us can reveal itself at different points, and we are enabled to "measure and weigh these various revelations in regard to the simplicity, power and depth with which they open up a higher supermundane life with God."[1] In other words the standard is fixed in advance constituted by the idea of thespiritual life and our historical evaluation only means the testing of the various values in regard to it. Simplicity, power, depth, form the criteria.[2,3]

The idea of a common goal underlying all evaluations, of an absolute value is characterized as religious faith."The unitary goal of things is guaranteed by religious faith."[4] The idea of the unity and meaning of reality is a form of religious faith.[5] The belief in God demands that this transcendent goal break through at certain points.[6] Evolution in the sense of a breaking forth of the forces directed towards an absolute spiritual goal is called an intuition and divination.[7] At times however the absolute value is looked upon

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. D. Chr. p. 64.
2. Ibid, pp.64-68.
3. One would like to overcome this discrepancy but I don't see any way out. Pages 64-68 of the Absolutheit simply bristle with sentences indicative of the ambiguity pointed out. The source of the difficulty is Troeltsch's constant shifting from the idea of a formal norm-consciousness to the idea of a metaphysical Geistesleben as I have tried to show.
4. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.57
5. Ibid, p. 63.
6. Ibid, p. 64
7. Ibid, p. 73.

as a necessary thought. The process of comparative evaluation presupposes this idea. A final end is the apriori of all knowledge.[1] There is one sentence in Troeltsch's "Modern Philosophy of History" which might engble us to solve this difficulty were it not for the fact that it is hard to decide whether Troeltsch intends the statement as an interpretation of Rickert's position or his own." The centre of knowledge, that which bestows meaning on historical knowledge must be also real, must be capable of realization" he holds. And then he adds: "but this is indeed a form of faith and in so far religious faith".[2] The idea of a final value thus is distinguished from its reality. The latter is accessible to faith only, the former is a necessary implication of the historical thought process.

Historical values are not all of exactly the same nature. Religion occupies a special place among the cultural values of the state, society, art and science. They are all objective values to be sure. Their origin is not to be traced to natural subjective desires. They are values and "ideas" valid in themselves and open up a higher world. But although they point towards a higher spiritual world and in so far contain a religious element, they nevertheless are concerned with the eternally changing reality of nature. It is different with religion. It points towards the Eternal and Permanent. It

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 708.
2. Ibid, p. 708.

is to be expected therefore that in the religious field the element of relativity will be less pronounced. This relation with the eternal and permanent ground of all spiritual life makes for the utmost simplicity of the religious "idea". It would be impossible to hold that this "content of life" should be subject to the most vehement oscillations and the most varied revelations."[1,2] Just as the other cultural values have achieved permanent forms in the same way it is to be expected that religion has already attained its fullest meaning.[3] The ascent of history has most probably produced a clear manifestation of the religious idea and we don't have to look for it in an unknown future.

The chief result of our analysis of Troeltsch's conception of the historical method for the problem of absoluteness may be formulated as follows: All historical thinking rests on an absolute in the form of a norm-consciousness, which necessarily leads to evaluation. The great meaning-complexes of the historical process are all approximations of an absolute aim or value. They all have an element of necessity, but the absolute or the fully realized value remains forever transcendent to the historical process.[4]

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 74.
2. It is evident that this view is a purely deductive construction. The definition of religion determines in advance certain findings of history.
3. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 75.
4. The historical process is therefore somewhat of a checked absolute. In his essay on the "Question of the religious apriori" Troeltsch suggests a possible solution of the problem concerning the relation of

2. Criticism of various accounts of the absoluteness of Christianity based on Troeltsch's interpretation of the historical method.

The preceding review of Troeltsch's philosophy of religion and of history has brought to light two "absolutes", an apriori law of all religious productivity and an absolute value functioning in all historical evaluation. The history of religions as so many religious value complexes is wedged in between these two absolutes. The question now arises: Can any one of these historical religions, e.g., the Christian religion, be made the absolute religion? In the division on the development of Troeltsch's attitude towards this problem we have analyzed certain answers entertained by him before accepting the philosophy of transcendentalism. In this section

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the absolute and the relative. "The unconditionedness of everything a priori, the continuity and the consistency of the historical products of reason point towards the active presence of the absolute mind in the finite, the action of the universe as Schleiermacher puts it, in the individual soul-units". "But the activity of the finite mind as issuing from the natural relationships does not directly coincide with it. The finite mind must surrender to the absolute mind." "A separation within the divine process of life is to be presupposed by which it falls apart into the psychic life as given and determined by nature and the world of reason whichmakes for the building up of the world of personality". "It is the idea of Hegel with the dialectic lift out or the idea of Leibniz with the idea of determinism and pre-established harmony left out." Schriften II, 764. But finally he decides that the whole question is unfathomable, it is an immanent presupposition of life.

we wish to deal with Troeltsch's attitude towards the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity as determined by this type of philosophy.

a. Troeltsch's criticism of supernaturalism as a means of establishing the absoluteness of the Christian religion.

Supernaturalism was rejected by Hegelianism on the ground that it violates the idea of causalityand evolution. Since Troeltsch does not look upon these ideas as constitutive elements of the historical method his refutation of supernaturalism must rest on different ground. His objections to it are those of Hume and Kant, and not those of Spinoza and popular science. This he states in his essay on "Das religiose Apriori"[1]. The historical method demands the ranging of the Christian religion with all other religions. It is one of the great individual productions of history[2] and must be dealt with in a manner compatible with all historical investigation. It is impossible to accept the miracles and revelations of the Christian religion and at the same time to deny those related by non-Christian religions.[3] If the triumph over the sensuous forces of life is hailed as supernatural in Christianity, Plato's and Epictetus' spiritual success should be viewed in the same way.[4] The principle of analogy requires that historical phenomena (like great

1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 765.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Christ. p.5
3. Ibid, p. 5.
4. Ibid, p. 5.

institutions, the rise of prominent leaders, the renewal of the general tone of life in groups as well as in individuals) be referred to forces which we are ready to recognize in connection with the entire historical process.[1] Troeltsch rejects the exclusive supernaturalism of orthodox theology on the ground of his conception of inclusive supernaturalism. Religion throughout is "an act of freedom and a gift of grace, the effect of the supersensible which penetrates the natural phenomenal life of the soul and an act of free surrender which suspends natural motivation."[2] "The recognition of revelation and miracle in all religions is a permanent factor for the philosophy of religion. To do justice to the demands of vital religion it must recognize the irrationality of all ideas of God, the incomprehensible mystery of divine communication, the social power of the inspiration of prophets and founders of religions."[3] Supernaturalism therefoe cannot be used as a means of isolating Christianity. The formal supernaturalistic characteristics employed to isolate Christianity are found in all religions. Consequently the abso-

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1. Schriften II, 766, "I am convinced that biblical criticism, church history and the history of dogma conceive of their object as being like any other historical object to this extent, that it can contain no other miracle except that present in all happenings. It is the exclusiveness of Christian supernaturalism which I oppose because it is incapable of proof. Neither the inner experience of conversion nor biblical tradition can demonstrate it."
2. E. Troeltsch, Psych. u. Erk. p. 39.
3. E. Troeltsch, Rel. Phil. p. 134.

luteness of Christianity cannot be established by calling it supernatural. We cannot distinguish sharply between "sacred" and "secular" history. For orthodox theology "ordinary history with its merely human truths was the realm of sin and error", while ecclesiastical history, gave absolutely certain truth, since it had its source in forces coming directly from God."[1] This "Sunday Causality" modern history has destroyed. The absoluteness of Christianity thus cannot be demonstrated by a formal mark which is denied to other religions.[2]

Another consideration which makes it impossible to isolate a religion by means of supernaturalism is that of relativity. Every value complex has a definite setting in which it occurs and from which it cannot be separated. Although every historical value takes form in the medium of the transcendental norm-consciousness its content is nevertheless empirical, part and parcel of a continuous time process. It receives significance because of the definite place and time in which it takes root. Christian history thus is continuous with the Jewish and Pagan religions.[3] Exclusive supernatural-

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 5.
2. One cannot help feeling that Troeltsch deceives himself when he thinks that his attitude towards supernaturalism is due exclusively to the historical viewpoint which demands that the traditions of the Christian church should be evaluated according to the same method used in all historical phenomena. Troeltsch's supernaturalism refers to the realm of mind and not to nature. The only thing he would calla miracle is the breaking in upon the purely psychic processes of the spiritual life (Geistesleben). Orthodox theology on the other hand knows of a great many more miracles. It is no doubt the idea of natural law, of continuity which prevents him from accepting the miracles of tradition either Christian or non-Christian.
3. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr.pp. 6, 14.

ism in the endeavor to avoid this kind of relativism puts Christian history in a class by itself, thinking thereby to safeguard the emergence of absolute truth in history. Troeltsch's conception of the historical as the empirical,[1] in spite of his inclusive supernaturalism makes it impossible for him to find in history anything other than the relative. No part of history can be fenced off and raised to a different plane by supernaturalism. In our introductory chapter we pointed out that supernaturalism with its claim of special revelation is closely allied with the attempt to find an absolute object of faith in history. Since the historical is the relative Troeltsch cannot make any isolated part of history an immediate object of faith.[2] "The desire to participate in the absolute in history in an absolute manner at a single point is nothing but a delusion."[3] The object of our religious sentiment is God himself or the superhistorical. "In God as the source of historical life the religious man has the absolute and not in any single historical phenomenon." "It (the Absolute) is there as the certainty concerning a final, infinitely valuable goal."[4]

Revelation is occasionally explained by Troeltsch as the hypostatization of the calim of validity adhering to every value which has become established without reflection and comparison.[5] This form of thinking which hypostatizes the naive

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1. As the actualized apriori.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 826.
3. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Crh.p. 98.
4. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr.p. 98.
5. Ibid. p. 3.

claim of validity into revelations of natural truths of reason Troeltsch calls the dogmatic type. Over against it he places the historic form of thinking which rests on comparison.[1] In the section on the sociological account of the idea of absoluteness we shall return to Troeltsch's interpretation of revelation as here expressed. Suffice it to say in this connection that exclusive supernaturalism has its roots in this kind of hypostatization for Troeltsch.[2,3]

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1. cf. pp.
2. If revelation is the hypostatization of the naive claim of validity it would seem that it has no place in a scientific account of religious, moral and other values. Revelation is explained as a dogmatic or unscientific form of thinking belonging to a stage which possesses no historical knowledge. But Troeltsch does not draw this conclusion. He reinstates the idea of revelation as long as it is inclusive and not exclusive. Now by doing so he changes the meaning of revelation. It is not a process by which men became conscious of an absolute object of faith at a certain point in history. It is the unfolding of a new meaning of life resting on the presence of a self-contained spiritual life in the soul. This twofold meaning of revelation distorts the whole issue. Troeltsch's account of revelation as hypostatization is clear and convincing. His reintroduction of the term in another sense is confusing and unsatisfactory. The distinction between exclusive and inclusive supernaturalism carries within itself a twofold meaning of supernaturalism. Troeltsch's inclusive supernaturalism is not supernaturalism in the orthodox sense of the term. It means that the individuall participates in a self-contained spiritual life which finds interpretation in great symbols taken from the social, economic, and political life of man reaching its culmination in the idea of personality. Exclusive supernaturalism on the other hand involves the suspension of a uniform order of nature physical and psychical, and the idea of miracle in the strict sense of the term. But this is not the term over against which Troeltsch develops his idea of supernaturalism. The terms exclusive and inclusive supernaturalism thus have different correlates.
3. Troeltsch's view of supernaturalism oscillates between the immanent views of Schleiermacher and Hegelianism and

b. Troeltsch's criticism of Ritschlianism as a means of establishing the absoluteness of the Christian religion.[1]

Ritschlianism as we have seen is an attempt to establish the absoluteness of the Christian religion by accepting the historical method. But it accepts it with the intent of avoiding its full consequences. Troeltsch's objections to it on the basis of his theory of the historical method are the following:

(1) Religions as historical phenomena can either be brought under the universal concept of religion or they can be approached as so many individualized religious complexes. Now Ritschlianism according to Troeltsch has been defective in producing a consistent method for dealing with religions as historical phenomena. It retains the universal concept of religion in dealing with non-Christian religions. They all have the universal characteristic of postulating or demanding the existence of the religious object. Christianity on the other hand is made individual and historic to such an extent that it is separated from all other religions and made absolutely unique. In the first case the historical category of individuality is neglected and the general concept of the nature of religion substituted for it, in the second case it is used at the cost

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(Footnote 3 p.121 Cont'd) the transcendent or dualistic view of orthodox theology. To maintain supernaturalism in the strict sense of the term a clear cut separation between the human mind and God must be presupposed. "The miraculous effects of God must in no wise issue from immanent forces innate in the human mind", as Hunzinger puts it. (p.140 Das Wunder.) We must have purely human thoughts , acts,aspirations, tinged by error, sin and weakness on the one hand and divine thoughts, acts, fulfillments on the other if supernaturalism is to make

of the complete rejection of common factors in Christian and non-Christian religions. Furthermore, Ritschlianism loses sight of the historical character of the ethical consciousness of manking on the harmony beteen which and the claim of Christianity the assurance of the absoluteness of Christianity rests. Ritschlianism assumes the universality and sameness of the ethical consciousness. But from the historical point of view all ethical ideas are individual products of history. Even the assumption of a universal moral law is a historical event. Thus here again Ritschlianism is not historical enough, it does not carry the idea of individuality far enough.[1]

(2) In the second place the distinction between the universal and the individual is used as a means of placing Christianity as the superindividual absolute truth over against non-Christian religions and moral ideas as mere products of natural reason. Christianity possesses absolute truth because

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(Footnote 3, p.121 Cont'd) the isolation of redemptive history complete. Because of his transcendental view of the human mind with its necessary and absolute laws Troeltsch is unable to accept the views of orthodoxy. On the other hand he does not fully accept the views of immanent idealism either. What Troeltsch calls revelation seems to be more than the presence of the spiritual life with its absolute values or the sudden seizure of some phase of human experience as a symbol of the absolute on the basis of forces immanent in the human mind.

For our purpose however the matter is sufficiently clear. Whatever kind of supernaturalism Troeltsch may believe in he does not make it a formal mark of distinction by which to establish the absoluteness of Christianity.

1.(Footnote p.122) cf. pp. Ritschlianism.

1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 49-51.

it is an historical individual religion par excellence. But the historical individuality of Christianity can never be the basis of its absoluteness since it makes it a particular conditioned phenomenon.[1] Ritschlianism simply repeats the old classification of religions into natural and supernatural religions, into postulates and absolute revelation. The uniqueness of Christianity makes it the supernatural absolute religion. Here the concept of historical individuality receives overdue emphasis. Other religions merely ranked as natural are not treated historically. The idea of their general nature prevails.

(3) In the third pla ce the supernatural absolute revelation which Ritschlianism finally attains is very indefinite. It makes Christianity absolute but it is an absoluteness which lacks a clear basis for absoluteness. The idea of miraculous causality as used by orthodox theology is rejected by thinkers of the Ritschlian school. Also the Hegelian conception of the realization of the idea of religion is set aside. But these are the only two possible methods of fencing off Christianity from the ordinary historical process. Ritschlianism accepts the historical method in its study of the life of Jesus and primitive Christianity. But if these phenomena are turned into individual historical complexes they become dependent on the conditions of the time. The absoluteness which Ritschlianism assumes thus clashes everywhere with the historical

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. pp. 49,50.

character of the Christian religion, its close relations with the non-Christian religions, and the analogous claims of other religions.[1] The idea of individuality applied for the sake of making Christianity stand out from other religions necessarily helps to embed it in a mass of relationships which prevent this very separation.

(4) The standard of religion cannot be attained by means of the individual character of Christianity which makes the unique claim of being the absolute revelation. Every historical value complex carries with it the sense of its validity. This very claim has to be understood historically, which involves comparison. If our search for a standard therefore is to be scientific it must rest onthe all embracing survey of religious phenomena. The principles of analogy and type have to be combined with the idea of individuality to make historical inquiry complete.

Neither the idea of supernaturalism nor the historical category of individuality thus are sufficient to establish an absolute historical content as the object of faith.

c. Troeltsch's cirticism of the Hegelian proof for the absoluteness of Christianity.[2]

Consistent Hegelian apologetics attempts to show as we have seen that man's knowledge of God finds full self-realization in human consciousness. The outstanding features of the

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1. E. Troel tsch, Abs. d. Chr. pp. 50.
2. Cf. p. ff.

theory are the following. The history of religions is the unfolding or realization of the general idea or the essence of religion. This process being causally and teleologically determined, reaches its perfection with absolute logical necessity in one of the historical religions, namely Christianity. An actually realized universal is made the norm in the world of religious phenomena. Troeltsch's objections to the Hegelian attempt to an establishment of the absoluteness of Christianity can be brought under five points.

(1) The Hegelian conception of the universal does not harmonize with the idiographic character of the science of history. The nature of scientific and historical concepts is confused. The nomothetic universal is made the productive force and the final aim of the idiographic particular.[1] History knows only of "concrete, individual, conditioned phenomena which are in the last analysis underivable and purely factual" but it knows nothing of general concepts from which the content and the sequence of actual happenings can be deduced.[2] The idea of the essence of religion embodied in Hegelian definitions of religious phenomena cannot be referred to the concrete facts. The lower stages of religious development hardly ever show any signs of this essence and the higher sta ges are too highly specialized to be comprehended by it.[3] The concrete phenomena of religion thus cannot be reduced to a universal essence of

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 697.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 29.
3. Ibid, p. 30.

religion supposed to be productive of the baffling variety of life.[1]

(2) The second objection is launched against the question of the absolute realization of the general concept of religion. The realization may be conceived of as either a causal or a teleological process. From the former point of view the absolute religion is present in the entire historical series but never at any one point. The teleological conception on the other hand would have to place the absolute religion at the very end of the historical process. But if the general concept is only realized at the end of the process its content cannot be known as long as the process lasts. This, moreover, makes it impossible to construe the stages in the process of realization, since we are unfamiliar with the end towards which it moves. And any historical view of the development of religions shows that the different religions cannot be arranged in an ascending scale with a final absolute religion as the goal. The great religions do not constitute a sequential series, they are simultaneous manifestations of the religious spirit, the worth of which can be determined only by a fair struggle between them.[2] Thus the absolute realization of the general idea of religion is everywhere surrounded by great obstacles. If history is going to make use of norm-concepts it cannot derive

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1. Troeltsch's criticism of the Hegelian universal is not meant as a rejection of historical abstraction altogether. On the proper use of the general concept, cp. Absolutheit des Chr. p.31, and Schriften II, p. 393.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 33.

them by means of the idea of an absolutely realized general concept.

(3) When the absolute religion is identified with Christianity the incompatibility between a concrete, individual, historical phenomenon and the abstract general concept of religion is directly felt.[1] Christianity throughout its history gives the impression of being everywhere conditioned by its mental environment.[2] If the "idea" of Christianity as distinguished from its concrete phenomena is made identical with the absolute essence of religion, the unfruitful sophistry embodied in the formulae of kernel and husk, form and content, permanent truth and temporary accomodations arises.[3] Troeltsch does not reject the conception of an "idea" of Christianity. But it is most intimately interwoven with its concrete phenomena,[4] and therefore cannot be identified with a timeless absolute essence of religion.

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr.p. 33.
2. The following instances are adduced to show the relativity of Christianity.
   a. Christianity in its origin presupposes the dissolution of the national religions and the naively established values.
   b. It also presupposes the attempts made to form new religions. Christianity develops chiefly because of its power to assimilate these new religions.
   c. Its essential ideas are the products of the eschatological form of thought. Its purely inner and ethical idea of God became possible only on this background.
   d. Christian morality with its transcendent, non-worldly values is conditioned by the expectation of the speedy end of history.
   e. The Christian idea of God after overcoming these mythical and popular ingredients absorbs the ethics of Plato and Stoicism, Greek idealistic metaphysics and Aristotelian teleology.(Abs. d. Chr. pp.34,35)
3. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.35.
4. Ibid, p.35. Cf. p. 91

(4) In order to guarantee the absolute realization of the general concept of religion the idea of evolution is used.[1] The latter implies not merely that "all great mental contents, ideas and energies of life at first make their appearance in germ like form and reach their full meaning through adaptation and opposition, the meditation and struggle of innumerable generations, but chiefly that the process is a causal and teleological affair in which "the goal produces the entire causal machinery of the psychic acts which succeed each other in a definite sequential series in such a way that the goal is realized with absolute logical necessity."[2] Now this view which presupposes the perfect congnuence of the causal and teleological series and the logical compulsoriness of the historical process completely contradicts the nature of actual historical occurrences.[3] The higher mental contents of life are neither the producing cause of the entire psychic series nor the results of a causally determined psychic process. Troeltsch's psychology as we have seen is dualistic. He assums a conflict between the merely causal occurrences of the psychic process and the higher mental contents which are independent forces imbued with a necessity all their own. A purely logical and dialectical construction of the stages of development is therefore impossible. History is the realm of freedom and personality.[4] The great historical religions thus cannot

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.29.
2. Ibid, p. 37.
3. Ibid, p. 38.
4. Ibid, p. 39.

be construed as a causal teleological series with the Christian religion as the climax. They are so many individual forms resting on personal evaluations and decisions. Each as an individual complex must be taken in its own right and significance. The historical idea of evolution does not permit us therefore to construe Christianity as the absolute religion.[1]

(5) And finally, history does not know of any factual universals completely coinciding with values and norms. It only knows of thoughts which are universally valid or which claim validity. These make their appearance in individual forms and can prove their validity only in their struggle with the purely factual.[2] Validity thus belongs to a different dimension than the factual.

d. The critical investigation of these various positions shows that the absoluteness of the Christian religion cannot be demonstrated by means of the historical method. Two attitudes consequently seem to be possible. The problem might be completely abandoned, or a restatement of the issue might be attempted. Troeltsch follows the second course. Let us therefore turn to the positive side of the application of the historical method to Christianity.

3. Positive interpretation of "absoluteness".

According to the logic and the philosophy of history as

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 40.
2. Ibid, p. 29.

understood by Troeltsch. Christianity is conceived as an individual and singular religious and moral value-complex. The orthodox conception of Christianity as a definite act of redemption in history (in the past) has given way to an ideological interpretation of Christianity as a view of the world and of life. As such it is a very complex phenomenon the full meaning of which can be derived only from an all embracing historical survey which takes in the unfolding of its germ as well as its beginnings. Being a developing historical phenomenon it cannot be pressed into a precise definition. It combines Israelitish Prophetism, the preaching of Jesus, the Mysticism of Paul, the Idealism of Platonism and Stoicism, the medieval fusion of European culture with religious thought, the Germanic individualism of Luther, the consciousness of duty and activity of Protestantism.[1] Its keynote is Personalism involving the break between nature and the transcendent value of personality, and the redemption of personality from nature.[2,3,4]

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 824.
   " " , Abs. d. Chr. pp. 82,84,92.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, pp. 826, 814.
3. Troeltsch's view of redemption is that of a spiritual process in which by trusting in a personal God, man is freed from the purely natural motivations and comes to participate more and more in the objective values of mind. The process thus is coextensive with history. Stages in the redemptive process may be distinguished, Christianity constituting the highest known to man.
4. Although Troeltsch looks upon religion as a good deal more than the possession of an idea of God, he occasionally reduces the whole historical phenomenon of religion to the idea of God. On p. 75 of the "Abs. d. Chr." he speaks of the "religious thought as achieving clearness in principle during the ascent of history" and of the "victory of the purest and deepest idea of God." From this angle the problem of absoluteness as interpreted

Now absoluteness as applied to this value complex can only mean its highest validity.[1] In this new conception of the problem Troeltsch's philosophy of value is quite evident. Other views like Supernaturalism, Ritschlianism and Gegelianism had placed the idea of absoluteness in the field of being. Troeltsch transplants it to the sphere of value and validity. Absoluteness is nothing but the highest validity and the conviction that a movement is going towards perfect truth.[2]

The difference between "the highest validity" and the absoluteness of Christianity is clearly brought out by Troeltsch on page 11 of the "Absolutheit des Christentums". Absolute truth means "the only and unique truth which holds for the world and God, for time and eternity."[3] The most consistent use of it is found in Hegelianism, where the divine mind is represented as wholly immanent inthe logical operations of the human mind. Highest validity on the other hand as conceived by Troeltsch refers to merely human highest and final attainment.[4] Absoluteness implies a divine norm-validity, a human norm-Validity stands between the poles of human ignorance and divinely perfect truth. The valid truth is directed towards the goal of absolute truth. But the latter is never realized. As compared with the conception of absoluteness, mere human validity may seem to offer

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(Footnote 4, p.131 Continued) by Troeltsch would simply mean the validity of the Christian idea of God. But the problem as thus formulated cannot be solved by means of the historical method.

1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 108.
2. Ibid, pp. 92, 106.
3. Ibid, p. 11.
4. Ibid, pl 11.

no basis for religious certainty. But the realm of validity offers the kind of certainty which is sufficient for the human individual in a world which is historical.

The terms validity and absoluteness also ascribe the distinction between the future and the present character of religious truth. Absolute truth belongs to the non-historical realm. We must wait for the termination of history for it to be manifested. While history lasts we only have more or less valid truth.[1,2] From the human point of orientation, therefore, Christianity is to be regarded as the highest religious truth valid for us.[3]

Troeltsch holds that the highest validity of the Christian religion also satisfies the demand for normativeness. Orthodoxy, Ritschlianism, Hegelianism on the contrary hold that no religion can be normative unless it constitutes the truth itself. In order to make Christianity the truth itself a unique place had to be found for it in the history of religions. But the historical method proves fatal to an attempt of this kind.

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1. E. Troeltsch. Abs. d. Chr. p. 100.
2. This view of course involves the immortality of the soul and the belief in a purely non-empirical, non-evolutionary form of existence. Troeltsch loses sight of his own objective idealism which assumes a "Geistesleben" with absolute values immanent in every individual psychic process. The historical and the ideal are now two realms which follow upon each other in a time process. He falls back on the naive and wholly unreflective popular way of thinking. It furnishes a very good illustration of the constant conflict between Troeltsch's theological or religious and his philosophic inheritance. His theological training constitutes the hand writing on the wall reducing to ashes his very best philosophical ideas.
3. E.Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 80.

The idea of normativeness therefore must be reconstructed in accordance with historical considerations. Normativeness does not require us to place the one and only true over against nothing but error. A norm can be established within the field of relative truth on the basis of higher and lower forms of validity. What for us under definite historical conditions turns out to be of the highest validity may then function as the normative.

This new interpretation here given by Troeltsch invests the idea of normativeness with a feeling tone very different from what it has had in theology. It takes the teeth out of this conception, it deprives it of the idea of overhead control and irrational authority. If what is valid for us constitutes the norm, our assent is needed in setting it up. Normative validity thus neither demands supernatural revelation nor the idea of absolute completion in religion.[1]

The substitution of the idea of highest validity for absoluteness makes it sufficiently clear that Troeltsch by his rejection of the absoluteness of Christianity does not merely mean the impossibility of the logical demonstration of Christianity as the absolute religion. It is true that Troeltsch puts a great deal of emphasis on the inadequacy of any logical proof to establish the absoluteness of Christianity. Troeltsch interprets supernaturalistic and evolutionary apologetics as endeavors to prove the absoluteness of Christianity by means

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. pp. 18, 19.

of a strictly rational process. But Troeltsch's criticism of these viewpoints is more than a mere refutation of their logical form of aggument. He rejects the idea of absoluteness as applied to a historical phenomenon altogether. The idea of highest validity is put in its place. These ideas are essentially different and mutually exclusively. Kurt Lese's attempt to show that Troeltsch's rejection of the absoluteness of Christianity merely refers to the logical form of argument overlooks the distinction which Troeltsch makes between absoluteness and validity.[1] Troeltsch does not maintain that since Christianity cannot be logically demonstrated to be the absolute religion its absoluteness can be established in some other fashion, e.g., by means of a special epistemology of values. He holds that the method of history does not allow any kind of absoluteness in the historical process. The idea of highest validity takes the place of absoluteness.[2]

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1. K. Leese, Die Prinzipienlehre der neueren systematischen Theologie., p. 168.
2. It is easy to accuse Troeltsch of inconsistency and confusio n as regards his view of the relation of absoluteness and history. He believes in objective, universally valid values which can find embodiment in the phenomenal psychic process. On the other hand he holds that the "absolute" is a superhistorical goal. A distinction thus is made by him between the realm of objective validity and the "Absolute". There is a mystical undercurrent in Troeltsch's thinking threatening his "personalism" which comes to light in this distinction.

CHAPTER III

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONVICTION OF THE HIGHEST VALIDITY OF CHRISTIANITY

Our next problem of investigation is to trace the method by which Troeltsch establishes the validity of the Christian religion, starting from a religio-historical foundation. All religions are true religions. But some are of less validity than others and some one is of the highest validity. How can this judgment be established?

1. The conviction is formed in different ways for the religious group and the individual. For the masses the religious conviction arise out of some visible authority, tradition, and social feeling which embraces several generations, it is anchored in some idea of revelation.[1] It is only in this wise that powerful social feelings and mass convictions can arise.

It is different however, with the educated man. The method of science has liberated him from the direct influence of social tradition and has transformed the question into an individual issue. We have to decide therefore whether we are going to adhere to the principle of "absolute and unconditioned religious individualism" or whether we are going to combine both attitudes, the scientific and the social.

In the "Absolutheit des Christentums" Troeltsch discusses the question of the validity of Christianity in reference

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1. E. Troeltsch, Rel. Phil. p. 131, 132.

to the educated mass and endeavors to solve it by combining the scientific and the social methods. It would seem thus that the religious conviction has two foci, the scientific or individual, and the social connected with the historic forces of religious history and the religious community. Now the latter is given a theological meaning by Troeltsch. Group conviction arises out of the idea of revelation. The question is can a reflective person using the scientific method and accounting for the group idea of revelation by means of it go back to the idea of revelation and establish his own conviction of the validity of Christianity thereon? No doubt he is fully entitled to return to the conviction of the religious community but not because he finds it based on revelation. His new reasons for valuing Christianity are found in its power of raising social as well as individual life. The reflective and historically trained Christian is unable to utilize the belief in revelation the way the Christian community as a whole does. He has discovered analogies of the same belief in other religions and has been liberated from the authoritative compulsoriness of the group's belief in revelation. Troeltsch's demand to combine the scientific and the social attitude seems to be confusing. By interpreting the social attitude towards religion historically and scientifically it is ruled out, it would seem as a basis for the establishment of religious convictions. The mere belief in revelation can no longer contribute to the religious conviction. What can be

used for the establishment of the religious comviction are the actual religious and moral contents that have arisen in the historical development of the group.

But we must not pursue this criticism any further and return to the presentation of Troeltsch's conceptions of the establishment of the validity of Christianity. Let us first deal with the subjective elements entering into that conviction.

2. Troeltsch discards all specifically theological means of apprehending truth.[1] This is the significance of his criticism of experiential supernaturalism and Ritschlianism. Since for Troeltsch there is no specific formal characteristic distinguishing Christian experience from other religious experience and isolating it from the latter a Christian religious epistemology is out of the question. Our judgment concerning religious values rests on the same methods and instruments which are used in establishing the validity of other values. The validity of Christianity must therefore rest exclusively on its conetnt as superior to other religious contents.[2] But if all value judgments are of the same character the question as to their scientific status is still open. Ritschlianism makes a distinction between scientific judgments and value judgments in order to escape the realm of relativity. The value judgment is superior because it deals with the absolute. For Troeltsch the judgment dealing with individuals is neither more

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 766.
2. Ibid, pp. 706-707.
   E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr.p.144.

nor less valid than the judgment dealing with universals. It does not receive its scientific character from the content with which it deals, but from the transcendental law of consciousness impelled by an absolute norm. Judgments of value as such are not any better qualified for coping with the absolute than judgments of fact. On the other hand value judgments have the same scientic worth as judgments dealing with laws. The monism of method, the view that only the sciences resting on the idea of law are turly valid, is rejected by Troeltsch. The formal character of judgment does not enable us to pronounce inadvance upon their validity. The scientific character rests wholly on the manner in which the conviction is reached and not on the formal characteristic of law or value.

3. The validity of Christianity is a matter of personal conviction. It cannot be logically demonstrated. But although this conviction will always be more or less of the nature of a confession it contains certain scientific elements. There are two features about it which give scientific character to this conviction. It is arrived at by an historical survey of the entire field of religion; and in the second place it rests on the hypothetical living over of other religious and moral value complexes. The decision thus is reached by making real to oneself the values of other religions. Christianity is taken out of its isolation in this manner and made one of the manifestations of religious thought and life. The difference between

Troeltsch's method of dealing with the question of the validity of Christianity and that of Ritschlianism and experiential supernaturalism is apparent. In Ritschlianism and experiential supernaturalism it is the unique isolated impression which makes Christianity valid, for Troeltsch it is hypothetically experienced variety of values on which the validity of Christianity rests.

But what are the results of the comparative method as used by Troeltsch? The only religions that deserve attention are the great universal religions. The religions of polydemonism and polytheism are of significance only for the scientific study of the beginnings and the derivability of religion. It is not until religions show the break between the world of nature and a supersensible world of absolute transcendent values that they are of interest for our question.[1] The great legal religions like Judaism and Islam and the religions of redemption like Buddhism, Brahmanism and Christianity fulfil this condition. But among these a distinction again must be made between the religions of law and of redemption. The former endeavor to realize the transcendent personal values of religionligion by means of the given natural capacities of man. The law is to be fulfilled as a result of the individual's own natural disposition. It is different in Buddhism, Brahmanism and Christianity. Here the soul needs redemption. But it is only the redemption offered by the last mentioned which

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.83.

is personal. The former make it dependent on a thought process which guarantees the illusory character of the world and of personal life and thus unite the soul with an Absolute which is mere undifferentiated unity. For Christianity the higher world is the world of personality, which realizes necessary and infinite values.[1]

The result of our comparative study thus is that Christianity is the only truly personal religion, indeed it occupies a unique place in the history of religions. It is the only religion which completely breaks with the world as given. It offers a higher world of personal life which liberates man from his merely natural life and makes him a sharer of eternal values. What decides the question of a religious standard thus is whether a religion offers a transcendent personal life and has the power to liberate man from his purely natural condition.

But Christianity is not merely unique. It also constitutes the point of convergence of all other religions. All religions have certain common tendencies. They all strive towards a common goal in regard to the conception of God, the world and the soul. These tendencies find their full realization in Christianity. They receive independence and power in Christianity.[2] Troeltsch here falls back on the metaphysical significance of historical relationships. It is his philosophy of history which is here made use of to establish

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. u. Chr. p. 84.
2. Ibid, p. 88.

the validity of Christianity.[1] The factors entering into the conviction of the superiority of Christianity are thus two: the uniqueness of Christianity and the fulfillment which Christianity gives to the germinal tendencies of other religions.[2]

Before taking up the personal elements entering into

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1. It is important to keep in mind that Troeltsch's epistemology of history is realistic or objective. He rejects neo-Kantian transcendentalism which looks upon our knowledge of historical development as an artificial product of logical selection, abbreviation and combination of matters of experience. Our knowledge of the developmental process has objective or metaphysical validity. Needless to say that he abhors the position of Pragmatism which renounces all objectivity in history and makes of it "the story of our memories serving practical ends."(Historismus. pp.674-5) Troeltsch believes in the intuitive participation in the concrete content and life unity of the infinite mind as unfolding itself in history. We know the "Realzusammenhang". Hist. p.678. (Historismus, p. 677). Troeltsch's philosophy is just as much determined by Leibnitz as by Kant.
2. One of the best statements of the idea of evolution as underlying this conception is found in the "Historismus u. seine Probleme", p. 657. History has its own idea of evolution because of the characteristic of the human mind to start from germlike ideas or tendencies and to elaborate their inner consequences in a logically comprehensible series.

   This process is also called the dialectic of historical tendencies. Troeltsch makes a distinction between the conception which construes the dialectic process as of a purely congitive type and the conceptio n which adds the kind of thought called "emotional". It is only by making room for the latter that an inner logic of historical tendencies becomes possible. Troeltsch adopts these ideas from Heinrich Maier's Psychology of emotional thought. He does not like the terms (p.658 footnote) but is unable to find better ones.

the conviction of the validity of Christianity it becomes necessary to point to some features of Troeltsch's proof (regarded no doubt by him as of minor significance) which play an important role in his theory. On p.87 of the "Absolutheit d. Christentums" he speaks of an inner necessity of conviction which compells us to distinguish between higher and lower stages of development in the religious world. Troeltsch nowhere discusses the question why the religion of personality is more valid than the religions of nature. It s higher value or validity is everywhere assumed but never critically examined. He points out that as such Christianity occupies a unique place. But why identify uniquesness and validity, especially since Ritschlianism was adversely criticized for this very identification? In the section cited, Troeltsch seems to offer an answer to his perplexity. There is an inner necessity of conviction attached to the various religious values. In other words the superior value of Christianity is known by intuition.[1] The function of a historical survey of the various religions thus would seem to be to call out the intuitive apprehension of superior value.

The second feature to which I wish to call attention in this connection is Troeltsch's attitude towards the question of

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1. In the process of comparing values a final decision is arrived at resting on "inner truth" and "necessity". The values carry with them an inner truth and compulsion. (p.57) Troeltsch is in the habit of attaching to his direct thought a number of modifications which makes it very difficult to be certain whether one has

the surpassibility of the Christian religion. Here he distinguishes between demonstration and faith. That Christianity is the final climax of religious history cannot be established with absolute logical certainty.[1] All proof ends here and we must rely on faith which is certain of itself.[2] The insurpassibility of the Christian religion is a matter of faith and as such is accepted by Troeltsch. Now if Christian faith has this inherent certainty any appeal to the history of religions to prove the validity of Christianity seems superfluous. This admission seems to explode his elaborate theory which demands a historical foundation for the conviction of the validity of Christianity.

Finally Troeltsch pictures the possibility of the complete decay of our western civilization and a reversal to barbarism. Even such a condition, he holds, could not destroy the truth and validity of the idea of personal redemption.[3] In other words the question of validity and the historical question are two different things. Troeltsch started out with the assumption that norms and values can only be established

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seized upon the very idea or a minor suggestion of no account for the chief thesis. For our purpose however it is important to point out all the elements which contribute to the final conviction no matter whether they can be consistently enter into such a result or not. In the statement just quoted the intuitional factor is very pronounced. (cf. also Abs. p. 67). The question raised here will be discussed more fully under the religious apriori.

1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 90.
2. Ibid, p. 90.
3. Ibid, p. 91.

historically (through the medium of experience) but he ends with the admission that whatever history makes of our values their validity is unimpaired. The transcendental and the empirical or historical elements of Troeltsch's reasoning could not very well clash in a worse way. In our critical summary we intend to return to this issue.

4. From the scientific elements entering into the conviction of the validity of Christianity, viz., comparison, hypothetical introjection and historico-philosophical construction, let us turn to the specifically personal elements of the conviction.[1] By the personal character of a religious or moral idea is meant the immediate value which it has for our life and feeling.[2] The judgment concerning the validity of the Christian religion arises from such an immediate affirmation of life (Lebensbejshun). There is an inner testing of the truth

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1. The term scientific is identical with logical. The following elements are designated scientific:
   a. Comparison. Value judgments must not be formed on the basis of an isolated impression. Comparison makes use of hypothetical experimentation. This is the reflective stage as used by Dewey and Tufts in their Ethics.
   b. Historico-philosophical construction making use of the idea of a specifically historical idea of evolution as against a physical or biological conception. This is a philosophical element and cannot be called scientific in the strict sense of the term.
   c. The transcendental idea of a religious apriori. It is somewhat confusing to call this element scientific since it is not a generally accepted idea at all.
   d. The transcendental norm consciousness underlying all historical investigation.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.95.

of life[1] to which the religious person appeals. The scientific validity of Christianity thus must be supplemented by the decision of life as it directly judges and feels.[2] The conviction of the validity of Christianity arises out of religious meditation, self-reflection and appeal to immediate feeling.[3] Now this direct or immediate conviction does not get us beyond the result of our comparative study. It is the apprehension of Christianity as the highest and best in religion and morality, but not necessarily as the only perfect and changeless truth.

The same personal character of the Christian conviction is implied in the idea of faith. The insurpassibility of Christianity is a matter of faith. The validity in general, however, is also a question of faith.[4] Over against the certainty of knowledge the certainty of faith is placed. The former is objective, the latter subjective. The certainty of knowledge is a finished product, the certainty of faith is a matter of struggle.[5]

But there is more involved in the personal character of the Christian conviction than this. The question does involve not merely the recognition of values of the past; it

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 95.
2. Ibid, p. 96.
3. Ibid, p. 96.
4. Ibid, p. 95.
5. Ibid, p. 99.

also concerns the present and the future. The validity of Christianity can be had only as an axiomatic deed or a present absolute decision.[1] The recognition of its validity is an ethical, religious deed. For this kind of decision the quality of time called duration by Bergson is needed. The present moment must contain the continuity of life and carry within it the past as an integral element in order to become creative and progressive at the same time.[2] "Historical time by means of memory, impulse and teleology controls the past and future and is creative."[3] Christianity thus can be normative only as the outcome of historical creativeness, for the decision can only arise as part of an individual historical process. Troeltsch here makes use of certain outstanding anti-intellectualistic tendencies in modern philosophy. The chief character of the philosophy of Nietzsche is its "irrationalism, its glorification of the sovereignty of life, its poetic-mythical apprehension of the aims of life."[4] The Pragmatism of W. James and the Biologism of H. Bergson are irrationalistic. It is this religious anti-intellectualism which Troeltsch means when he speaks of the personal character of our evaluations. But since Troeltsch's view makes the idea of an ethical norm-consciousness more central than either James, Bergson, or Nietzsche, his anti-intellectualism is controlled by an objec-

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. pp. 48, 92.
2. E. Troeltsch, Der Historismus u. seine Probleme, p. 643.
3. Ibid, p. 698.
4. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II. p. 810.

tive element. It is to this element that we must now turn.

5. We are face to face once more with the religious apriori. Religion like all other cultural values has its apriori which gives it an independent validity arising with inner necessity.[1] Now this religious apriori which guarantees the underivability of the religious phenomenon is also of significance for the establishment of the validity of Christianity. "If religion contains an apriori, i.e., a specifically religious consciousness of validity, it will also function in the conflict of different religions just as it functions in regard to the non-religious manifestations of mind."[2] The religious apriori is present as an objective element in all religious subjectivity. Although our decision concerning the validity of a certain type of religion is anti-intellectualistic, it is not an act of caprice or of mere taste, but occurs because of the element of validity inhereint in the subjective process with the feeling of inner necessity. The chief tendency of mental life is intuitively felt and our decision thus carries with it the feeling of this tendency.[3] It is quite evident that Troeltsch's religious apriori as discussed above has taken upon itself a role hardly provided for by its purely formal character. It is now an intuition determining with inner necessity the superiority of higher validity of one form

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1. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 819.
2. Ibid, p. 820.
3. Ibid, p. 821.

of religion over another.[1]

A further line of arguement substantiates this interpretation. The whole development of religion is interspersed with the results of the religious apriori and is found as an objective element in it. Thus the progressive impulse of life (Auftrieb des Lebens) has an inner continuity, which has no logical foundation, but is intuitively felt as the reaching out after even higher and more ultimate ends.[1,2] Now the intuition which grasps the whole developmental process of religion as the realization of an absolute goal rests on a combination of the religious apriori with the transcendental apriori of history. The religious apriori now has taken on a teleological character which it did not have at first. It is an absolute end which is present in all religions. The intuition here referred to is also spoken of as a psychological

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1. Unfortunately Troeltsch nowhere shown how the apriori functions in order to achieve a result as here described. If it is nothing but the feeling of the divine or the presence of an absolute lacking every other character it could hardly help us to establish the validity of religion of personalism over against that of the religion of nature. Troeltsch would have to give his apriori the content of a value feeling of personality in order to achieve this result. His religious apriori which does too much in deciding the truth of religion in general does too little when confronted by the question of the validity of Christianity.
2. E. Troeltsch, Schriften II, p. 822.
3. Troeltsch attempts here a combination of Hegel and Bergson. The developmental process is a logical but has a unity which is its upward thrust is intuitively apprehended. In so far Bergson is right. Hegel on the other hand was right in making the process teleological meaningful. (Schriften II, p. 822).

feeling of evidence accompanying a valid idea.[1,2] Troeltsch offers the theory just sketched as a way of combining the antiintellectualistic and rationalistic methods of establishing the validity of Christianity. But Troeltsch's objective element can hardly be called scientific. His intuition, with its inner necessity is mystical. The upshot of the whole argument is that by approaching Christianity religio-historically and making a survey of the various religious and moral values its higher validity is felt intuitively because of the teleogical content of the apriori present in all of them.

6. Troeltsch as we have seen in very strongly opposed to the method which starts from a formal sign of the religious idea and deduces its validity. In regard to the validity of Christianity he holds that it cannot rest on its special revelatory character over against which all other religions are mere postulates of human makeshifts to satisfify the religious craving of the human heart. Nevertheless this view does not exclude the connection of validity and revelation. Christianity is not called valid because it has a special form of revelation but it can still be valid because it is revelation. There can be no doubt it seems that Troeltsch usessrevelation in this

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1. But this feeling of evidence can err.
2. It seems to me the best interpretation of this complicated condition is to look upon it as a new conception of the religious apriori. It is now the consciousness of an absolute end or value. The mystical element which was the chief significance of it, at first has suffered disintegration through Troeltsch's acceptance of the philosophy of value. Schriften II, p. 760.

manner. The social elements of religion thus find a place once more in the argument for the validity of Christianity.[1] We must have the certainty that in Christianity God is revealed if Christianity is to be valid. Let us quote from the "Absolutheit des Christentums". The religions person needs the certainty of being on the right road, of following the right star.... he will be a christian because (in Christianity) he is conscious of the most powerful and the simplest revelation of the higher world." "The impression made by its founder will call out in him the certainty of a revelation of God which is final and which opens up a new life." From this the faith will spring that he is dealing with a religion which is normative in the future."[2] The certainty of revelation thus is most intimately connected with the conviction of the normativeness and validity of Christianity. The objective reference is thus established. Christianity is valid because it is the manifestation of the Absolute.[3,4,5]

Troeltsch's establishment of the highest validity of Christianity is thus a very complicated affair. It makes use of a comparative study of the various religious and moral values that have emerged in the course of history, a philosophy of

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1. Cf. I. p. 122.
2. E. Troeltsch, Abs. des. Chr. pp. 97,99.
3. The consciousness of revelation will occupy our attention once more in the next chapter in connection with the problem of naive absoluteness.
4. Troeltsch's Absolute is substance and value at the same time. It is not completely identical with the highest value. Schriften II, p.494.
5. E.Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 106.

development which interprets the continuity of religious history as due to an ethical norm-consciousness giving each stage a validity all its own, a form of intuition enabling the religious person to discern the higher and lower stages of development, an antiintellectualistic theory of values and a conception of revelation. The modern scientific method of history is the source of the first of these factors. A somewhat modified Hegelian philosophy of history combined with Rickert's transcendentalism provided the second factor. The religious idea of experience as held by experiential Supernaturalism and Ritschlianism and supported by certain modern forms of philosophy of life is the basis of the third element. Revelation is used because of the transcendent and objective character of his view of reality. The first three factors would have sufficed for a purely immanental view of things, the last one is a remnant of religious and ontological dualism.

The validity of Christianity for Troeltsch depends on certain elements of necessity which determine our decision. There is first of all the necessity of religion itself as an objective product of mind resting on an apriori law. Then we have the necessity of the norm-consciousness functioning in all the great evaluations of history. Furthermore in apprehending the religious and moral values of history we are directed by an intuition which makes for the proper scaling of values. Troeltsch's attempt does not essentially differ from the

ordinary theological theories of validity. It also rests on and falls back on an established order of existence. Religious and moral values can be understood in themselves and as such. The element of risk which Troeltsch introduces into his theory might have given it a forward look, but he does not utilize it in that fashion. The objectivity of historical evolution reduces the element of risk to a minimum. Instead of getting our assurance from a revelation at a certain point in history we get it from an apprehension of the drift of the unfolding of the germinal tendencies as manifested in the historical process.

CHAPTER IV

TROELTSCH'S ACCOUNT OF THE IDEA OF ABSOLUTENESS

Absoluteness as Troeltsch points out again and again is a term having its roots in modern evolutionistic.apologetics. But he extends its meaning to cover the general character attaching to certain forms of thinking and convictions of value as well. Absoluteness thus is identified with the immediate self certainty of a certain kind of thought. A twofold account of this idea is given. It is interpreted epistemologically and sociologically. We shall take them up in turn.

1. The epistemological account of the idea of absoluteness. The discussion turns from an objective absolute in history to the question of absolute subjective certainty. He wishes toaccount for the subjective claim of absoluteness as made by outstanding religious persons and organized religion. The religious consciousness of absoluteness does not differ from the consciousness of absoluteness found in all naive prescientific thinking concerning facts and values. "Every judgment of perception every natural impulse of the will, every rule come down to us and every custom is taken as absolute by the naive man."[1] In dealing with absoluteness we are thus dealing with a general characteristic of naive thinking.[2] This form of thinking prevails as long as comparison and comparison and combination are lacking in the thought process.

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.110.
2. Ibid, p. 110.

With the enlargement of the radius of experience conflict and contradiction arises, destroying the immediate assurance of naive thinking. The loss of absoluteness for the particular items of experience does not mean however the complete abandonment of all absolute certainty. It is merely pushed back from the periphery of experience to the most generalprinciples used for the ordering of experience.[1,2] A similar process takes place in the realm of religious and ethical values. Here also the expansion of experience makes for conflict and contradiction, stimulates comparison and combination and locates the absoluteness of conviction in a more comprehensive concatenation of things.[3] The change here described is simply that from a naive view of the world to a scientific view.[4] The problem of absoluteness as raised by religion is identical with the problem of the relationship between the naive and the scientific view of things.[5] Religion is one of the great ideal contents of mind which emerge "with the necessity of exclusive validity."[6] In art, the state, the social order, morality and religion "man possesses the necessary, that which ought to be the higher life, which realizes objective values necessary in themselves."[7] The naive certainty of absoluteness thus is

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p.111.
2. Troeltsch here undboutedly means the transcendental categories and principles of thought and not universal judgments of experience. Experience with its contradictions urges us on to locate absolute validity in a transcendental realm. The universal judgment of experience would only be one step in the process.
3. E. Troeltsch, Abs.d.Chr. p.113.
4. Ibid. p. 111.
5. Ibid. p. 112
6. Ibid.p. 117
7. Ibid. p. 117.

transplanted from the particular religion to the religious phenomenon as such or rather the scientific view of religion makes us look upon the particula r convictions of absoluteness as an expression of the "compulsion of an objective world of mind, of the power of values which ought to be." "This certainty thus is the accompanying exponentof the content itself and maintains itself in a manner and to the extent as the content itself is felt in its full power and as individualized."[1] The naive form of absoluteness finds its justification in the transcendental necessity of all religion just as the certainty of all naive thinking finds its justification in the compulsion of the thought process.

Naive religious absoluteness which is by no means destroyed by the scientific view of the history of religions has many forms. The polydemonistic and polytheistic religions have a limited form of absoluteness since the deity is still closely connected with the tribe, the nation, and the placd of worship. An unlimited absoluteness is found in the great ethical and mystic universal religions corresponding to the most universal control of the deity over all things. Christianity as the religion of pure individualism and humanity has the most pronounced consciousness of absoluteness. Although it might seem that these various claims of absolutenss as made by all religions exclude each other, a truly scientific view

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 119.

of religion finds the same underlying general principle at work in all of them.[1]

So far Troeltsch's exposition seems clear and a legitimate deduction from his conception of the transcendental ground of religion. The various historic claims of absoluteness are many reflexes of the necessary law of religious production. But since the transcendental law is transformed by Troeltsch into the consciousness of a religious object, the claim of absoluteness is suddenly interpreted as the natural accompaniment of the idea of God.[2] "Where God and the goal of the mental life strongly and vividly appears to the soul, the absoluteness of God is communicated to the experiences, ideas and opinions of him in a perfectly naive manner."[3] Naive absoluteness thus turns out to be the "inner connection between the bearer of revelation and God who speaks through them".[4] The naive consciousness of absolutness is identical with the consciousness of revelation with the certainty of the divine calling.[5]

This line of reasoning is quite unwarranted if it assumes to be scientific. Suppose Troeltsch's method in dealing with religion and its consciousness of absoluteness is scientific, he would then be justified in reducing all individual claims of absoluteness to the immanent law of religious productivity but he is wholly unjustified in looking upon the

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. pp. 128, 143.
2. Ibid, p. 129.
3. Ibid, p. 129.
4. Ibid, pl 130.
5. Ibid, p. 126.

individual claims of absoluteness as issuing from so many objective divine revelations made at all those different points in history where these claims occur. When naive thinking breaks up because of the process of comparison, the consciousness of absoluteness is lost in regard to all particular judgments and becomes attached to the most universal principles of investigation. Now if the same is to happen in the field of religion the particular consciousness of absoluteness as occurring in religious leaders can no longer be interpreted by the scientific mind as it was by the naive religions person. Inreducing the consciousness of absoluteness to a general principle at work in all religions it loses for ever and completely its connection with a definite religious object which is revealed in a particular historical fashion.[1] Troeltsch's account of the consciousness of naive absoluteness so promising in the beginning in placing it on the same basis with all naive thinking becomes highly ambiguous by introducing the ideas of traditional theology.

2. The sociological account of the consciousness of absoluteness

In addition to the naive consciousness of absolutaness

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1. Troeltsch's fundamental position is ambiguous. He attempts to graft upon his Transcendentalism an objective Idealism which would make room for the application of the religious categories of revelation and miracle as used in theology. Following his Transcendentalism he should have interpreted the idea of revelation as the unfolding of the religious nature of man.

which is the natural exponent of religion itself and an integral part of religion there grows out of the institutionalizing of religion another form of absoluteness designated artificial or apologetic absoluteness by Troeltsch. Artificial absoluteness is the result of a theory put forth to legitimatize the naive claims of religion.[1] This process sets in as soon as religion organizes itself for the sake of carrying on its missionary activity. Naive absoluteness thus is individualistic. Artificial absoluteness is social.

Since Christianity is an institutional religion par excellence the question of artificial absoluteness has become more acute in connection with it than with any other religion. The following conditions made for the very early transformation of the naive claim of Jesus into theories concerning him and the unique character of Christianity, (1) the natural distance between the church and its master, which naturally led to the greatest possible isolation and exaltation of the master, (2) the natural dogmatism of a child-like way of thinking isolating and breaking up all connections, (3) the admiration of the believers losing all proportions, (4) the need of the church for a firm foundation, (5) the transformation of the church into a new religion by means of the Christ-cult, (6) baptism and the Lord's supper and (7) the apologetic defense against Judaism and syncretism.[2] Artificial absoluteness

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 128.
2. Ibid, p. 131.

raises its head for the first time in the belief of the early church in the messiahship of Jesus and the mysticism of Paul. Here the absoluteness which at first was attached to the kingdom of God becomes now attached to the person of Jesus.[1] The master is made the only authority in religion.[2] The more closely the church becomes organized under the stress of competing religions the more dominant this interest in theoretical absoluteness becomes.

Troeltsch finds three main theories developed by the church to satisfy its interest in artificial absoluteness or authority, the supernaturalistic theory, the rationalistic and the evolutionistic. The first makes of Christianity a unique and exclusive form of divine revelation. All other religions are the products of devils and demons, human wickedness and error.[3] "The church's own position is felt as positive, all else is purely negative."[4] The rationalistic theory of absoluteness finds truth also in other religions and philosophies. But it is interpreted as a remnant of man's original revelation or as the preparatory work of the Logos incarnated in Christ.[5] All religions and moral truth is divided into natural and divine truth. The latter is embodied in sacred books, dogmas, creeds, rituals and has a sacred history all its own. The third theory is a product of modern times. Evolutionistic absoluteness has reference to the content of Christian truth. The other theories were formal. Incarnation, prophesy, miracles were form-

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 127.
2. Ibid, p. 134.
3. Ibid, p. 134.
4. Ibid, p. 134.
5. Ibid, p. 135.

al signs of the divine truth which however, could only be partially comprehended. The theory of evolutionary apologetics makes the content of Christianity the absolute truth of religion, having sacrificed the formal marks of recognition of the divine truth under the stresss of modenn history.[1]

All these theories of artificial absoluteness get their motive power from the church's original interest in the localizing, safeguarding and guaranteeing of the blessings of salvation. The religions community as one organization among many exercising social control had an interest in having its claims legitimatized. This interest acquired more and more fervency with the establishment of Christianity as a state church. With the transformation of a religious movement into a state church the character of authority which prevails in the state is added to the original certainty of religion.[2] The whole question thus is identical with the question of authority.

The modern historical way of thinking enables us to clear up the distinction between naive and artificial absoluteness. It knows of analogies of the same kind in the development of other religions. Judaism and Islamism show the same evolution from a naively felt consciousness of absoluteness to the artificial absoluteness of sacred institutions, priest-

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 142.
2. E. Troeltsch, Veruunft u. Offenbarung bei Joh. Gerhardt u. Phil. Melanchthou.

hood, rituals, sacred books and a sacred history. Artificial absoluteness is thus a normal product in the history of religions caused by the institutionalizing of religion. Modern history teaches us to look upon it as a "relatively justified product" since the founding of an institution needs sharp distinctions and vehement passions. But the rise of historical knowledge puts an end to it, annihilates it by comprehending it, and liberates religious faith from its inner compulsion.[1] The content of Christianity must be evaluated therefore independently of its ecclesiastical claim of absoluteness. If its content is valid we can look upon it as aiming for the absolute. On the other hand its formal claim of absoluteness historically comprehended as an artificial growth cannot settle the question of its validity.

Troeltsch's account of the consciousness of absoluteness is twofold. Naive absoluteness expresses the necessary character of all ideal contents,[2] artificial absoluteness is due to the institutionalizing of religion.[3] The latter is the fulfillment of the former in the form of a theory. But neither the one nor the other can decide the question of the validity of any type of religion.

If we raise the question concerning the justifiability of this distinction we must first decide whether the naive

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1. E. Troeltsch, Abs. d. Chr. p. 133.
2. Ibid, p. 139.
3. cf. p. the hypostatization of naive claims of validity.

consciousness of absoluteness which is the consciousness of revelation can be rightly reduced to the transcendental compulsion characteristic of all ideal contents. It would seem to me that in identifying the two Troeltsch confuses his own theoretical construct with a particular historical phenomenon. The transcendental compulsoriness of religion if such there be is the outcome of a survey of the religious phenomenon as a whole. It is not to be connected with the sense of a divine call which certain religious individuals calim to have. But if this is so the distinction between naive and artificial absoluteness would also seem to lose its rigidity. The revelatory claim of the religious innovator does not arise in a vacuum, he makes it as a member of a religious group whose opposition he feels. His consciousness of absoluteness is therefore not the exponent of the content as such but of that content as different from the content maintained by the group. The claim of revelation is from the very start a social weapon having its source in primitive views of the psychic process. The revelatory feature of course becomes more prominent and more highly accentuated with the organization of new religious forces released in a community.

DIVISION IV

CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF TROELTSCH'S VIEWS CONCERNING THE ABSOLUTENESS OF CHRISTIANITY

Before undertaking a critical estimate of Troeltsch's views let us recapitulate the results of our study.

1. From about the year 1900 Troeltsch's writings begin to express a negative attitude towards the absoluteness of Christianity. In place of this conception the idea of the highest validity of the religious and moral values of Christianity is employed.

2. The idea of absoluteness is accounted for in two ways. (a). The claim of absoluteness is the necessary accompaniment of an unreflective naive stage of thinking. (b) Absoluteness is the apologetic product of institutionalized religion.

3. Naive absoluteness is relatively justified since it is the reflex of the transcendental necessity of religion. But the interest claim of religion cannot be used to establish the absoluteness of any particular religion, e.g., Christianity, because other religions make the same claim. In the practical religions life naive absoluteness will always retain a certain amount of justification but it cannot be maintained reflectively in a scientific world.

4. Institutionalized religion produces a new type of absoluteness, called by Troeltsch, apologetic or reflective

absoluteness. Apologetic absoluteness is theoretical in character. The motive underlying theoretical absoluteness is a sociological one. Here the question of absoluteness is essentially a question of group control and authority.

5. All the theories of absoluteness examined in our discussion, Supernaturalism, Ritschlianism, Hegelianism, Speculative Rationalism - are the outgrowth of the sociological motive of attaching authority to the institutionalized Christian religion.

6. None of these forms of apologetic absoluteness is tenable in the light of modern historical method and its philosophical implications.

7. The denial of the absoluteness of Christianity does not include the rejection of the validity of the outstanding religions and moral values of Christianity for us. To make Christianity normative such human validity is sufficient.

8. Troeltsch's proof for the validity of Christianity rests on a twofold foundation, (a) critical transcendentalism and (b) a form of historical value-philosophy.

9. To prove the validity of Christianity Troeltsch first proves the validity of religion in general. The critical analysis of cultural products shows the independence of religion. In other words religion rests on an apriori norm-consciousness. Since it is independent, religion cannot be judged by extraneous standards. Religion as an independent content

of the human mind has its own form of expression, the mythological or symbolic. Its validity cannot be established therefore by rationalizing it. It must be approached as a great value complex making its appeal to all sides of human nature. It is by means of evaluation and appreciation only that a particular form of religion can be made valid.

10. The particular validity of the Christian religion rests on a historico-philosophical foundation.

a. History as the science of history has its source in a transcendental norm- or value-consciousness. The value judgment thus has an apriori foundation and is as scientific as the judgment concerning laws and facts.

b. The ultimate unit of history is consequently the "value complex" or "the individual totality".

c. Because of the individual character of every historical phenomenon it is impossible to establish the validity of Christianity by generalizing it and by searching for its general concept of its essence. History must affirm therefore the legitimacy of "intuition" as a means of apprehension.

d. History as a process has objective continuity. This continuity rests on the transcendental presence of an absolute value-consciousness. The relations and tendencies of history are objective and not mere categories of thought. By projecting ourselves into the stream of historical development we are able to discern the objective tendencies of history.

The objective character of historical relations thus is the foundation for an "intuitive grasp" of the "Auftrieb" or the "forward thrust" of historical life.

e. Since every act of evaluation and historical apprehension is itself an act in time or a historical act it is productive of values. Evaluation is not mere apprehension; it is the making valid of values. Validity is thus an axiomatic act.

11. Since history for Troeltsch is the interaction of two opposite forces, of nature and an independent transcendent spiritual life he retains the religious idea of revelation.. Christianity is valid from this angle because it is the fullest manifestation of the spiritual life.

In turning now to our critical estimate of Troeltsch's position we wish to answer the four following questions. (1) Has Troeltsch made an actual contribution to the question of the approach to the problem of the absoluteness of Christianity? Does his position signify a real advance over former positions? (2) Has Troeltsch's very complex theory any inner consistency? (3) Is Troeltsch's denial of absoluteness acceptable? (4) Is Troeltsch's solution of the establishment of the validity of Christianity satisfactory?

(1) Troeltsch again and again states that his theological endeavors are a continuation of the traditions of objective Idealism originating with Schleiermacher and Hegel. He

claims to be the restorer of their religio-philosophical method of dealing with Christianity. From Hegel especially he learned the evolutionary historico-philosophical approach to the products of human civilization.

But between the philsophy of Schleiermacher and Hegel and Troeltsch we have the development and elaboration of the historical method. What other men had done for the historical branches of theology Troeltsch did for Dogmatics. He recognized that the historical method meant a new tool of the modern man for dealing with the realities of life and that Theology must accept it in the form given to it by the study of historical objects. Theology must refrain from distorting or changing the significance of the historical method in the interest of certain theological prejudices or speculative fancies.

Troeltsch's acceptance of the Schleiermacher-Hegel tradition thus is not an attempt to escape the influences of the empirical historical method as is the case with most Hegelian theologians. All that Troeltsch takes over from Schleiermacher and Hegel is the "religious geschichtliche" approach to the Christian religion and the interpretation of the products of culture as objective, superindividual achievements of mind. Troeltsch thus eliminates the purely speculative elements of the tradition of Idealism.

As over against the conceptions of rationalistic Super-

naturalism, experiential Supernaturalism, and Ritschlianism Troeltsch's method of approach to Christianity marks a definite advance over all the artificial means used to isolate Christianity, (e.g. the idea of special supernatural causation, of special Christian religious certainty, of a special impression in connection with the person of Jesus). Instead of endeavouring to establish the validity of Christianity in opposition to the empirical emthod of history Troeltsch fully accepts the positive application of the historical method to Christian religion.

The acceptance of a truly historical approach to Christianity on the part of Troeltsch involves at the same time the rejection of speculative Rationalism as a method of establishing religious and ethical realities. The fundamental requirement for the forming of religious and ethical convictions is compatibility with the method of history. It is by going back to the actual manifestation of the great religious and ethical forces in the past that the conviction concerning the validity of these forces can arise. The establishment of a religious outlook onlife is thus organically connected2with the modern historical interpretation of things.

The answer to our first question whether Troeltsch's views signify a real advance in the history of Theology thus must be an affirmative one.

2. The next question is whether Troeltsch's way of dealing with the problem of the absoluteness and validity of

Christianity is free from conflicting elements. There seems to be a clash between the empirical aspects of Troeltsch's historical method and the one hand and his philosophy of mind and the transcendental factors of his historical method on the other. This view of the objectivity of the spiritual life as well as his conception of the transcendental consciousness of values and norms can hardly be fitted into his empirical-historical method of dealing with values.

It is not at2all surprising that Eucken critices Troeltsch for making the spiritual life subordinate to history. According to him the belief inindependent contents of mind involves a superhistorical point of view. Truth can be discovered in history only onthe basis of such a transcendent spiritual life. The problem of the spiritual life should be made primary and the problem of history secondary. So Eucken contends. If one has as much knowledge concerning the spiritual life as Troeltsch claims to have of its independence over against the empirical forces of life and the forms of manifestation in art, science, morality, religion, the laborious process of making connections with the values of the past seems somewhat superfuluous. Thus we have a serious defect inTroeltsch's method at this point. His conception of the spiritual life drives him in the direction of a superhistorical point of view while his empirical historical method makes him turn to the actual process of history for the emergence of religious and ethical values.

The abandonment of the empirical as the exclusive

pathway to religious and ethical values takes revenge upon Troeltsch by destroying the most significant feature of his views, anamely the risk involved in our evaluations, the freedom in the setting up of values and consequently the progressiveness of human values. Troeltsch's spiritual life places us in a non-historical realm and thus severs our connections with the relative, historical,empirical life as it actually comes to us. If history is the source of all our thinking about norms and values we must take history in its actual, empirical character as is demanded by the modern historical method. Troeltsch's combination of the absolute values of the spiritual life with the relativities of the historical process is an impossible one and necessarily leads to inconsistencies.

Another inconsistency arises from the combination of the historical method with the method of Transcendentalism. The philosophy of transcendentalism presupposes certain absolutely valid rational structures of the world and life,perfect and permanent in their nature. The modern method of history on the other hand looks upon all such structures as evolutionary products. Transcendentalism if at all consistent tends to the erection of an absolute system of values regardless of the question of the historical growth of values. From his transcendental standpoint Troeltsch thus derives the consciousness of an absolute value, but his historical method leaves him with a variety of particular value-complexes. Now it would

seem that the transcendental method requires the deduction of all values from the absolute value. We would then get a "system of eternal values". From the historical point of view on the other hand we can never overcome the plurality of values and the contingent factor of particular systematization. Even a so-called absolute value would involve historical conditionedness. The affirmation of "Truth" as an absolute value for instance would itself be a historical judgment and cannot express a superhistorical condition of mind.

Since we are concerned exclusively with the question of method it might seem out of place to refer to Troeltsch's oscillating attitude as regards the "formal" or "material" interpretation of the transcendental consciousness of absolute value. But Troeltsch's indecision results from his ambiguity of method. His transcendentalism makes for the acceptance of a purely formal norm-consciousness, while his empirical historical method demands the recognition of the value of personality as a historically developed value complex.

It is quite apparent that Troeltsch's interpretation of the historical method contains conflicing tendencies. And it would seem that Troeltsch's attempt to unite Absolutism and Relativism is a failure since it rests on mutually exclusive methods of procedure.

3. In the next place, is Troeltsch's rejection of the absoluteness of Christianity well founded? Troeltsch bases his refutations of the arguments in favor of the abso-

luteness of Christianity set forth by Orthodoxy, Ritschlianism and Hegelianism on the implications of the historical method. Special supernatural causality, special Christian certainty, a unique impression of an absolutized historical person, absolute and final fulfilment of an idea, all these conceptions are incompatible with the method used by scientific history.

Troeltsch's interpretation of the historical method as well as the conclusions he draws from it for our problem must be fully endorsed if theology is to maintain a scientific position. The affirmation of dogmatic absoluteness is thus made invalid by the historical method.

4. Finally: is Troeltsch's solution of the establishment of validity of the Christian religion satisfactory?

The distinction between the absoluteness and the validity of the Christian religion seems to be perfectly legitimate and acceptable. The question is whether Troeltsch's method in dealing with the validity of Christianity is a tenable one?

To approach Christianity as a great value complex instead of as a system of rational thought is demanded by the very nature of religion. The mythical or imaginative factor in religion, its appeal to the emotions and the will as well as to the intellect demand the introjective or apprehensive (intuitive) method of approach.

But it seems doubtful to establish the validity of

such a complex wholly on the basis of the past. Troeltsch makes religion first of all a necessary product of reason and then hopes to evaluate its different stages by means of a directly functioning intuitive value consciousness. The actual proof for the validity of Christianity turns out to be once more an inner compulsion which one cannot escape.

It is at this point that Troeltsch's position needs modification. It is true that religious and ethical values of significance for us to-day must have their anchorage in the past. Our evaluations must rest on the things man has actually lived by in the past. But our evaluations need just as much a present and future orientation. The validity of Christianity must rest just as much on what it actually means to us to-day, as on a direct appreciation of past values. The test of the validity of Christianity must be the empirical test. It is the world of to-day that will prove Christianity adequate or inadequate. Moreover it is impossible to test the validity of Christianity as a whole. Its forms are too varied. We come in touch with Christianity only as a particular value complex or as a number of particular value complexes, Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Liberal, etc. The validity of Christianity concerns these particular forms of Christianity. Our testing of Christianity moreover is just as much a making of Christianity as a mere acceptance of a definite form of Christianity.

Troeltsch is fully aware of these implications of his position. But his falling back on an absolute law of reason and an absolute goal prevent him from making these elements of his theory central. It seems, however, that Troeltsch's views point forward to this more experimental, pragmatic, empirical test of validity.